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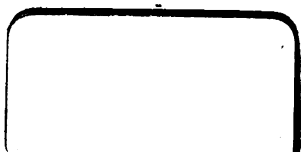
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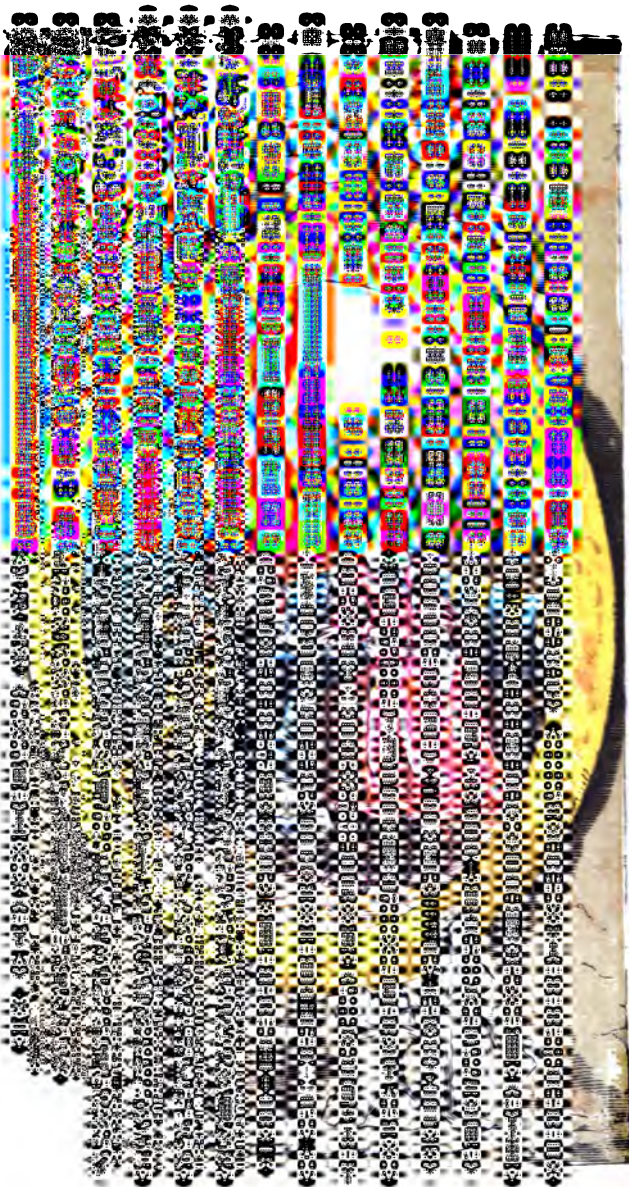
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HINTS
ON
HUSBAND-CATCHING:

OR,
A Manual for Marriageable Misses.

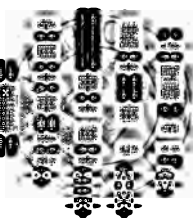
BY THE HON. ———.

AUTHOR OF "HINTS ON THE NATURE AND MANAGEMENT
OF DUNS."

"Man-traps set here."

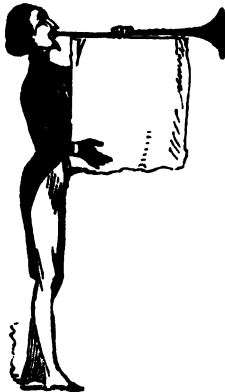
LONDON:
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1846.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE
SPINSTERS OF ENGLAND.



AIR LADIES:—

At first sight, and to an unreflecting mind, the title of my Treatise might perchance appear a somewhat indelicate one. Marriage, in its nobler and more exalted attributes, is an institution so important—I

might almost say, so solemn—that it would seem a profane mockery for a worlding, like myself, to lay down my rules for your guidance in selecting—and entrapping—partners for that “Holy Estate.”

The importance attached to the institution of Marriage is not at all an exaggerated one. To select *one* from the mass of mortals with whom you are henceforth to share the good and ill of life in common; *one* whose tastes, pleasures, interests and affections are to be yours, whether your twin-journey be along the pleasant and flowery valleys of existence, or up its steep and precipitous paths; *one* whose morning and evening prayers are to ascend with your own to God; *one* whose unclosing eyes are to greet the morning sun when yours do; *one* who is to eat at the same table, to drink of the same cup, and to be, in a word, like the “lamb” which Nathan’s beautiful parable described as “lying on the poor man’s bosom;” and all this not for a few years only, but “till death” you

“do part”—to select a partner like this, ought, indeed, to be a grave, almost an awful task, and not the theme for the satirist’s or the jester’s pen.

And yet, ladies, I feel emboldened to dedicate my “Hints” to you, and to approach, with the cap and bells of Momus, a subject which *ought* to be too sacred for anything less pure than a seraph’s wing to touch! And why? Because, my fair readers, *you* have not been taught to look upon Marriage in so solemn a light; *you* have not been impressed with such grave ideas of that tremendous undertaking; you, in short, would yawn with *ennui* at the serious dissertation, while you may welcome with a smile the more congenial jest.

But in one sense I err when I assert, that Matrimony is not an object of vast importance in your eyes: almost from the cradle you are trained up by your ambitious mothers, to consider Marriage the aim of your existence, the

“one thing needful” of life; its “Open Sesame” to wealth, distinction, and luxuries of every description.

Matrimony, then, is to be to you the signal of emancipation. A “married woman” may do what she likes, and as long as she keeps within the limits of decorum—that is to say, as long as she is not actually an adultress—she may flirt, dress, and enjoy herself to an unlimited extent. No wonder, then, poor girls, that with such prospects, maternally and insidiously held out to your attention, you are soon convinced how desirable a consummation lies within the circle of “the plain gold ring.” No wonder, then, that you eagerly take your places in the ranks of matrons expectant, and arm yourselves at all points for conquest. For this you study coquetry—so admirably called by George Sand—whom I may quote without offence, as your delicacy now-a-days never recoils from a French novel—“the puerile and immodest amusement of exciting desires;”

for this you suffer each ball-room booby to clasp your waists and breathe upon your cheeks in the waltz ; for this you attempt—you have not the Parisian art of accomplishing it—the Polka ; for this you leave uncovered the swan-like neck, and the ivory shoulders, and benevolently display to us as much of your beautiful busts as you dare to show with a due regard to the “ Society for the Suppression of Vice ;” How can you then take it amiss, if, in addition to the valuable precepts of your admirable mothers, a humble bachelor, of some little experience perhaps in the ways of this wicked world, should take it upon himself to give you a few useful and unpretending “ Hints” towards the furtherance of your dearest projects?

Will you not be grateful for the advice so disinterestedly offered? And should that advice enable you to attain your objects—not of *affection*, that is *mauvais ton*, but of ambition—will you not eternally bless your humble monitor?

Delightful thought! when the husband is gained, the object accomplished; when at night the partner of your fate lies snoring comfortably by your side, the thought may occur, while you are gazing with emotion upon the tasseled nightcap of your drowsy *sposo*, "Had it not been for the author of that blessed book, my Henry (William, John, Thomas, or Alfonso, as it may be) would not be with me now. Heaven shower its best blessings upon that clever scribbler, and may he be as happy as his precepts have made *me*!"

Such, fair ladies, is the only guerdon I ask. I do not write for fame, or gold, for "a bad picture," or "worse bust," as Byron has it, but I *do* write with a humble but hearty hope, that you, Spinsters of England, may be benefitted by my instructions. Is it not acknowledged, that no task can be more sweet than "to teach the young idea how to shoot?" And must not that task become an infinitely more sweet and useful one, when the game at

which aim is to be taken, is that valuable quarry, the biped lord of creation—man?

There *may* be such a thing, even in the year 1846, as a delicate and ingenuous maid, whose ideas of love and marriage may recoil from the artifices and snares which I am about to describe; but if such there be, no *fashionable* mother has had the superintendence of her education, and my pages must remain a sealed volume to her—*la mère n'en permettra pas la lecture à sa fille.*

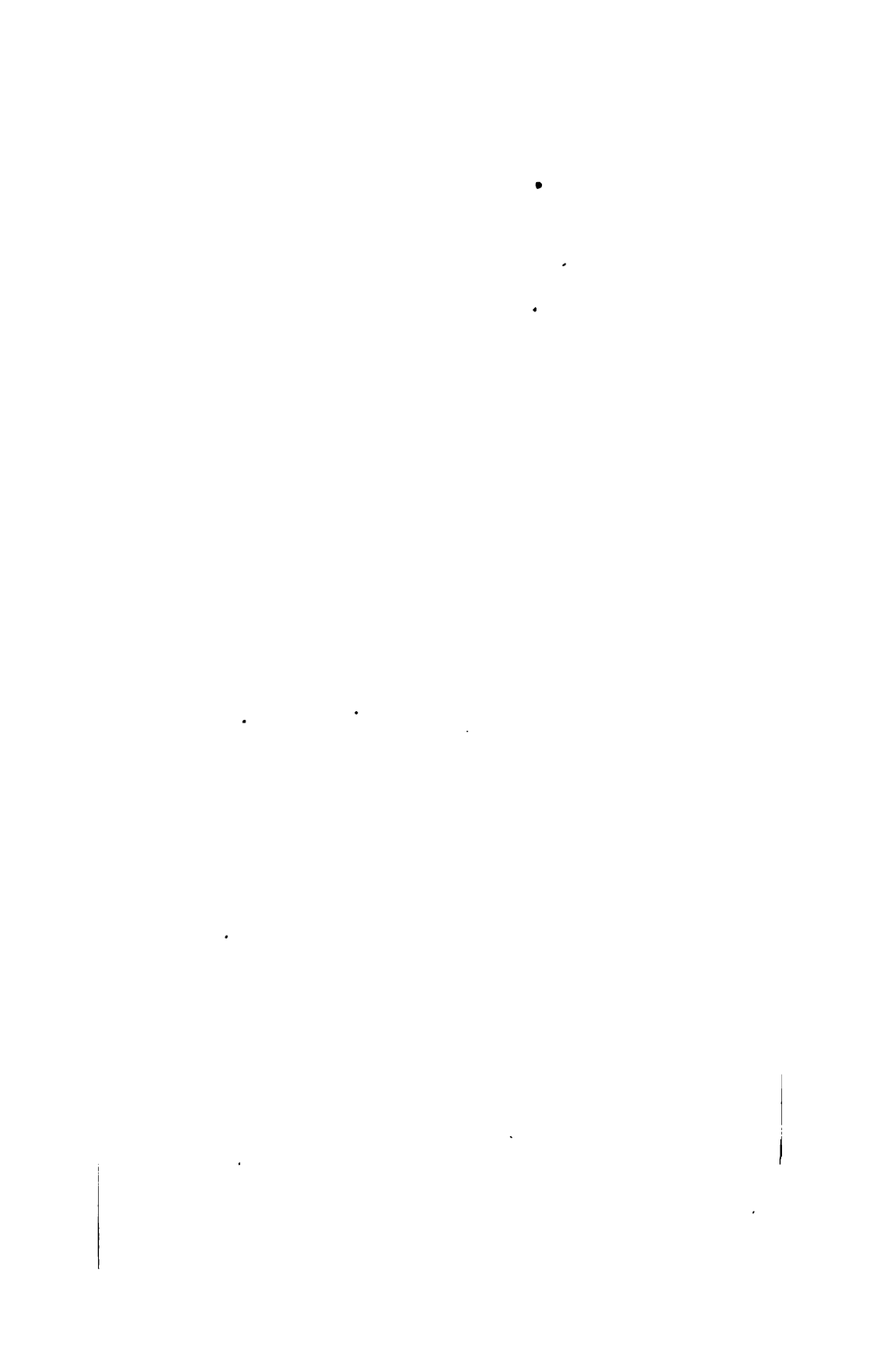
It is to the Spinsters of England in general that I address myself, and not to those isolated, particular, and exceptional specimens of the breed, whose untutored hearts would, in their simplicity, shudder at the idea of forming a matrimonial alliance, that was not based on the indissoluble foundation of mutual affection, esteem, and respect. *Procul este*, such as these! But ye, fascinating beauties, who would fain marry for the sake of marriage, and not for that of the man; flirting and coquettish

damsels, whose blushes are as superficial as the modesty they are intended to denote ; creatures not of impulse, but interest ; not of candour, but calculation ; showy speculators, who carry into the matrimonial market all the tricks and “ dodges ” that distinguish the “ stags ” of Capel-court—ye are the readers to whom I inscribe the following pages.

The *heart*, God knows, has little enough to do with Matrimony in the present day. It is the clear *head*, the beguiling lip, and the serpent smile, which carry all before them.

Whether happiness follows the unions so contracted, in as great degree as it would marriages based upon different principles, it is not my province to pronounce, or yours to inquire. “ As you make your bed, so must you lie in it ; ” and if the *nuptial* bed you prepare for yourselves should prove to be a thorny one hereafter, blame the folly of those who educated you, and your own heartlessness, for the result, but not the author of these “ Hints,”

whose purpose is *not* to *reprove* or *improve* your principles, (!) but simply to lend the aid of whatever slight experience he may possess, in making your path easy. Besides, hearts so callous, and so ossified by education and example as yours, are not likely to break, whatever may be the *mécomptes* of their matrimonial career: it is the warm and sparkling streamlet, that opens its bosom to receive the stone flung by some rude hand, while the dull and ice-bound pond repels the missile, which finds a surface as impenetrable as itself.



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HINTS

ON

HUSBAND-CATCHING.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE EDUCATION OF SPINSTERS, AS APPLICABLE TO THE ART OF HUSBAND-CATCHING.

THE hound must be disciplined and broken-in, before it can be advantageously employed in the chase ; the falcon must be duly trained before it can strike its quarry ; so also must the Spinster be prepared, by education, for the more arduous and exciting chase of man. There is a natural instinct, doubtless, in the

dog and in the hawk, which prompts them to the pursuit of *their* prey; so also is there in the Spinster an instinctive *elan* towards her bachelor—or widowed—victim; but in all three, nature must be modified by art, and impulse by education, or the chances are, that the hound, the falcon, and the Spinster, will all and equally be frustrated in the attainment of their respective objects.

Nor is this preliminary education by any means an easy performance. Men have become—and well they may—so wary, so on the *qui vive*, against all matrimonial advances, that the unmarried ladies' difficulties are often most puzzling to surmount. Clubs, kept mistresses, and “short, but sweet,” connexions with French actresses, have rendered our *jeunesse dorée* so fastidious, or so incredulous, that they can see but little allurements in the attractions of a fireside and a wife—of their own. Men are essentially selfish beings, and the *sans gêne* and carelessness of illegitimate connexions are

far more likely to find favour in their eyes, than the more respectable, but the more onerous ties of a Mrs. Caudle, and perhaps half-a-dozen little C.'s.

In the first place, my fair pupils, you must learn, sedulously learn, to check every feeling with which nature may have inspired you of enthusiasm or ingenuousness. The days of Arcadian pastrols are over; you must become "of the earth, earthy," hard, cold, selfish, and unscrupulous, but still, of course, observing all the code of *this* world's morality. You cannot do better than follow the advice of Mrs. Norton's sentimental ballad—*un-sentimental* though that advice be—"Love not!" Here is the rock you must shun, these are the breakers you must avoid. Love to a match-hunting spinster, is like the centaur's fatal shirt, a garment of destruction. Love blinds the eyes when the sight is most required to secure the rent-roll and the jewels of the proposer; love intoxicates the senses when their utmost acute-

ness is needed to calculate what *per centage* each granted favour will bring in; love *might* turn the scale to the advantage of honourable poverty, and put an extinguisher upon the hopes of wealthy decrepitude.

Again, then, I say unto you, "Love not!" What, let me ask you, are the objects you are desirous of obtaining by matrimony? what are the advantages you anticipate from making "a good match?" Your answers will doubtless vary according to your several dispositions; but I shall, I fancy, be little out, if I name emancipation from the routine and dulness of home, handsome carriages, fine horses, an unlimited credit at Howell and James's, a box at the opera, a magnificent country seat—and last, not least, the selfish wish inherent in all human natures, of eclipsing, and mortifying by that eclipse, your rivals in the race.

Tell me now, fair readers, do you really, in your own hearts, care one farthing as to the moral qualities, worth, or merit of the male

individual who can confer upon you one or all of these advantages? I do not deny, that you would prefer the conjugal incumbrance on all these good things to be handsome, clever, agreeable, good-natured, perhaps virtuous; but seriously, does not the intrinsic value of the man weigh but a mere trifle with you, in comparison with the pleasant luxuries which that man can bestow?

You cannot deny my "soft impeachment;" what then has *love* to do with you? Were marriage in your eyes a solemn bond, to which each of the contracting parties brings all that he or she possesses—not only materially, but morally, possesses—as their security for the performance of the contract: were the chosen partner one whose wishes you firmly intend to study, whose tastes you feel it will be not only a duty but a pleasure to consult, even at the sacrifice of your own, and whose foibles you will mark with a glance of indulgence, while your warmest smiles and your most enthusiastic

admiration will be the tribute paid by you to the virtues which he displays—then, indeed, love would be a *sine quâ non*, for without love you could not form such an union as that. But your case is a different one. You marry for *self*—why, then, should you care for *another*? Love, therefore, must be sedulously banished from your education and your hearts.

You, my accomplished readers, marry *not* to insure the happiness of your husbands, but the enjoyment of your own luxuries; *not* the approbation of your God, but the envy of your fellow-sinners. Christianity, then, must hold no place in your education. Nor would it be advisable for you to dedicate any time or attention to literature—at least, to that sort of literature which improves and adorns the mind, while it delights the understanding and gratifies the heart.

Of what earthly *use*—to adopt the expression of your prudent mothers—would the lay of the poet, or the impassioned, yet elevating,

prose of the most brilliant genius, be to *you*? The poet sings of love, of the ineffable harmony which links the adorer with the adored; of the wild, yet sweet fancies; the dreamy, yet entrancing ecstasy, which are the lot of those who love. The gushing tenderness of the maid, tempered as it is by modesty, the noble ardour of the youth, chastened as it is by esteem, the spheres of light, to whose glorious regions mortals are borne on the wings of affection; these, and such as these, are the minstrel's theme, while rare and exalted conceits, holy and sublime ideas, spiritual aspirations, and heart-sprung enthusiasm, glow like the diamonds of the mine, amid the polished phrases of the essayist and the philosopher.

And what, my husband-hunting readers, are all these profitless vagaries to you? Like Gallio, you "care for none of these things." The literary diet I should recommend for your digestion, is the vulgarity of a Mrs. Trol-

lope, the fashionable and senseless slip-alop of a Mrs. Gore, and the dull personalities of a "Coningsby;" or if these, and those which resemble them, are found at last *too* vulgar, *too* senseless, and *too* dull—take up a volume of Balzac's, Sue's, or Soulié's—what Spinster now-a-days, from the Lady Arabellas to the Miss Smiths, does not understand, or pretend to understand French?—where the most immoral doctrines, the warmest scenes, and the most monstrous principles, are at least disguised, if not compensated, by such brilliancy and pathos?

As, then, you must avoid love and Christianity, so also must you carefully eschew the vanities of *real* and pure literature in your education. I have told you what you must shun: I will now proceed to dwell briefly on what you must acquire, to fit you for the pursuit on which this volume purposes to treat.

And first, I will address myself to those

among my Spinster readers who happen to be gifted with beauty. All, doubtless, consider themselves so; even this exhortation, then, will be generally followed. Beauties! whether dark or fair, short or tall, slender or stout, believe me—and I speak from experience—a woman's beauty, like a rough diamond, is nothing unless placed in a becoming setting.

A handsome woman is not required to talk much, but the conversation you do indulge in should be the frothy small-talk of what is called "the world," agreeably modulated, of course, to suit the particular bias of your male listener. Should your plan, however, be to entrap some green country bumpkin, some musty *savant*, or some crabbed old bachelor, of course you will have to make some alteration in the style of your conversation, which may render *it* more attractive, and *you* more likely to succeed. You will find more ample instruction on this head in those subsequent

chapters of this work, which treat of the various *genera* of bachelors, and of the modes best calculated to entrap each.

If you have good teeth, manage to display them as often as possible. Men like good-nature in women, and, whatever your temper may in fact be, a constant smile—especially if your teeth are beautiful—is very apt to produce a conviction in the male victim that it is really a very sweet one. This same stereotype smile may, of course, be dispensed with *after* marriage, which peculiar tie will, doubtless, give you many opportunities of proving to the poor devil that “all is not gold that glitters,” and that *good* teeth and a *bad* temper often go together.

To those of my lady-readers who have unfortunately not been endowed with beauty by Providence, my advice must, of course, be somewhat different. Yet, however deficient a woman may be, upon the whole, in personal attractions, it seldom happens that she is with-

out *some* redeeming point of face or figure, and whatever that redeeming point may be, make the most of it, I entreat you. Perhaps you have a beautiful arm? Study, then, the harp, by all means, and wear short sleeves. Perhaps you ankle and leg are exquisite? Always wear short petticoats, and select a muddy day to walk with your intended prey. Dress, too, if skilfully adapted to conceal, as far as possible, any defect, and to bring out into relief any perfection which you may possess, will be an inestimable assistance in your matrimonial projects.

In conversation, you should always display a touching and becoming consciousness of your own plainness. Dwell freely upon the superior beauty of your rivals—this will look as if you had a good heart, and one untainted with the fiend Envy—occasionally hinting, with a down-cast eye, a flushed cheek, and a sigh of emotion, what a humble and adoring slave you could become to the happiness of any man who *could* so far overlook your want of per-

sonal charms, as to choose *you* for his partner in preference to the more fascinating and lovely creatures who have crossed his path. Men like these imploring kinds of natures, which look up to them with the devoted humility of a negro, and the beseeching fondness of a spaniel.

The few hints I have given in this chapter to my Spinster readers, as to the education, etc., most adapted to further the end they have in view, must not be looked upon as all, or even half, which might be said upon the subject. But when I consider the heartlessness, worldly tact, and interested perceptions of fashionable, and indeed, where the marriage of their daughters is concerned, of most mothers, I have little fear, but that their maternal anxiety and penetration will be able to add materially to the few maxims which I have laid down. I have watched the progress of many and many a woman towards matrimony, and have, I freely own, been perfectly astonished—though few

things *can* astonish *me*—at the unwearied perseverance, the more than Machiavelian diplomacy, and the much more than questionable manœuvring by which mothers contrive to get rid of their daughters, and to graft the “fruit of their entrails” upon some strange or doubtful tree, caring not one sixpence whether that fruit will flourish in bloom and luxuriance, or soon drop off, a faded, broken-hearted, and withered thing.

I cannot, I flatter myself, do better than wind up this chapter with the following poetical illustration of my subject:—

THE MOTHER'S ADVICE TO HER
DAUGHTER.

My girl, you must not fall in love
With virtue or with wit;
Unless there's rank, or money too,
To gild the pill a bit.

Wit's but a frothy thing at best,
And virtue stale becomes ;
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums* !

Nor let good looks beguile your heart,
To throw itself away ;
What, after all's, a handsome face ?
'Twill wrinkle up some day.
Gray hairs *will* show, eyes *will* grow dull,
When man's cold winter comes ;—
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums* !

Don't ever let me hear you say
A word of " mutual flame ;"
That's not the way to win the trick,
In matrimony's game.
Besides, such flame, though hot at first,
Soon dim and quenched becomes ;
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums* !

Love's very well, for wanton bards,
Your Ovids, Moores, to sing,
But for a girl that's well brought up,
'Tis an indecent thing.
I never loved your father, child,
Just ask him; here he comes;—
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums!*

I know a youthful face has charms,
For girls just fresh from school;
But oh! I hope no child of mine
Will be so great a fool!
Young men are often wild and gay,
Old age discreet becomes;—
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums!*

'Tis very well for vulgar folks,
To talk of hearts and darts;
But girls like *you*, should be above
Such sentimental parts.

A knock! it is that lord so ick—
Though he has toothless gums;—
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums*!

Just move that ringlet, love, and as,
You sit, take care to show
That pretty foot, blush—if you can—
That's it! you're perfect so!
I'll leave you to receive the peer—
Here old Lord Liquorish comes;
Stick to the *solid pudding*, Jane,
And marry for the *plums*!

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR BEGINS TO GO DEEPLY
INTO THE SUBJECT OF HUSBAND-HUNTING,
AND DISPLAYS MUCH USEFUL AND AGREE-
ABLE ERUDITION ON THE OCCASION.

MARRIAGE has been defined, in an old saying, as similar to the operation of putting your hand into a bag which contains ninety-nine snakes and one eel. If you get hold of one of the serpents, the chances are, that you get considerably bitten; if you grasp the eel, you are a most lucky individual. Without agreeing entirely with such a sweeping assertion, I must needs confess, that matrimony is in most cases

an operation of very dubious results. Like amputation, or St. John Long's "rubbing" panacea, it is generally a case of kill or cure. The ladies, however, have, in my opinion—though I may be taxed with prejudice in saying so—a much greater chance, I do not say of happiness, but at least of tolerable comfort, in the experiment, than their male partners.

Women, thanks to the delicacy and feebleness of their natures, are treated with more punctilio and consideration by men in the marriage state, even when the alliance has turned out uncomfortably, than the other sex is by the ladies. A man must be a coarse brute to hurt, at least wantonly hurt, the feelings of his wife; while the ladies—bless them! even the most refined and sensitive ones, think nothing of venting their ill-humour upon their unlucky husbands in a thousand, nay a million of little ways, which, from their very apparent insignificance, become doubly annoying.

But yet, my fair readers, you must not rely

too much upon this apparent bias of Dame Fortune in favour of your sex. A prudent Spinster will study well, before marriage, the nature—so far as she *can* study, what her suitor generally takes care to conceal, as much as possible—habits, temper, disposition, and foibles—the foibles, above all, for they are hobbies on which, when once mounted, a man may be led, by a clever hand, to the devil itself—of him whom she thinks of accepting as her future “lord and master.” She will watch keenly every play of the muscles, every change in the countenance, every variation in the demeanour, and shape her own course accordingly; while with the same assiduity that she employs in diving into *his* secrets, she will scrupulously hide *her own* from his scrutiny.

Women, again, have the advantage of men in this respect. The male sex cannot fit so closely, or wear so becomingly, that mask of graceful dissimulation, which ladies put on and carry with so much fascination. A man

who wishes to be on his guard, and reserved, ordinarily becomes sullen and silent; while a woman is never so lively, *talkative*, and good-humoured, as when she is using the most profound dissimulation to obtain any object which she may have in view.

There is another circumstance, which conduces very much to the value set by men upon the smiles of the fair sex. A woman seldom or never accepts a man frankly and unreservedly; there is always a good deal of well-acted reluctance in the answer given to the proposal, a kind of fencing with the question, as though there were something indelicate in the very name and idea of marriage; a sort of repugnance, in short, like that of American young ladies, who cannot bear to hear the legs of a table alluded to, and would faint with horror at being discovered marking a chemise or a night-gown. This *may be* modesty, or it may be affectation, but it has an extraordinary effect upon men.

Many a bold soldier, who would lead the forlorn hope, with a smile upon his lips, trembles when about to "pop" the awful question to some coquettish girl; and many a brazen lawyer cuts but a craven figure when he has to plead in the court of love. The best of it is, that the young lady, who is blushing so beautifully, and displaying such a fascinating tremor (while you stand before her all doubts, hopes and fears, and half shuddering at your own audacity, in daring to woo so ethereal a being), is probably laughing in her sleeve at your perplexed look, and congratulating herself equally in her sleeve, upon having at last attained the end in view.

Deceit is the very essence of woman's nature; and you might as well blame the fox for his cunning, or the lion for his ferocity, as the fair creature you are wooing, for her pretty hypocrisy. And this conduct, I must confess, is, in my eyes, highly politic. Were a lady to own unreservedly, openly and ho-

nestly, her affection to her suitor, the chances are a hundred to one, that everybody—and the “happy man” himself, would throw the first stone—would call out against her unwomanly boldness, wonder she was “not ashamed to do so,” and raise a universal clamour against the unfortunate beauty who for once had ventured to be sincere. Depend upon it, then, my fair readers, dissimulation is your forte. However warmly you may feel, be all ice outside; and when you do condescend to relax, let it not be till the settlements are drawn, the nuptial knot tied, and till at least twenty-four hours have beheld you two “one flesh.”

In the kind of alliances which *you* are desirous of forming, believe me, nothing can be more detrimental, or more likely to interfere with your success, than any practice of that old-fashioned *rococo* virtue—candour. Yours are not the bosoms which could bear every thought to be revealed without detriment, nay, even

acquire fresh influence and admiration from the display. There is too much of the diplomatist, and too little of the Christian in your natures, not to render an exposure of your *real* thoughts and sentiments highly dangerous to your own interests, and probably highly disgusting to the spectator.

The "gentleness of the dove" is generally, by poets and romance writers, cited as one of woman's most delicious attributes; but the husband-hunting Spinsters of the nineteenth century, may with equal, if not more, propriety, lay claim to the "wisdom of the *serpent*" also. You have reduced marriage—that tie which ought to be brought about by such genuine, sincere, spontaneous, and mutual affection—to the part of a game of skill, in which dexterity will carry the day; and no one can deny, that on the matrimonial chess-board, you, my fair readers, very often make some particularly "deep moves."

It is a curious fact, and one interesting to

the philosophical looker-on at the game of husband-hunting, that unmarried ladies derive much more assistance from the counsels and instructions of *mothers*, and other *female* relations, than they ever do from their fathers or *male* connexions.

Woman's disposition and nature are inclined to intrigue; and the skill, manœuvres, and adroitness which have become useless to themselves, are yet not permitted to be laid up and grow rusty, but are brought by kind-hearted matrons to the assistance and support of their unmarried relations.

The father has generally the business, the pecuniary interests, and the government of the family to attend to; while the mother finds an ample field for employment in the edifying occupation of superintending the progress of her Spinster daughters towards the dazzling regions of a "good match." The mother, then, is the natural ally of the daughter in matrimonial projects, while papa's functions in

that department are generally confined to paying the "dear girl's" *dot*, or inquiring, with laudable and parental solicitude, as to the satisfactory footing on which the "intended" stands at his banker's. Honour your fathers, then, Spinster readers—for *their* money pays for *your* luxuries—but love your *mothers*—as far, at least, as such hearts as yours *can* love anything but self;—for *they* are your surest guides in your pursuit of a husband.

There exists much diversity of opinion as to the place and scene where the art of husband-catching can be exercised with the greatest prospect of success. After a deliberate consideration of the *pros* and *cons.* on both sides, I declare my conviction, that no place is so favourable for a Spinster's projects as a country seat; I do not mean a country seat where a *large* circle is assembled, and where the men are out all day engaged in the sports of the field, while politics and animated discussions as to the greater amount of rascality possessed

by Whig and Tory form the interesting theme of their after-dinner conversation. No, I mean a quiet little place in the country, where no other guest but the intended victim is allowed to intrude upon the family circle. The amiable Spinster is beheld there in all the amiability of home and the domestic affections; as it were, in the moral undress of life. And who does not know that woman is most fascinating when in a becoming *négligé*?

Under such circumstances, the infatuated wretch is likely to “commune with himself” something after this manner:—“What a charming creature is that Seraphina! how natural and unaffected she appears; what delight she takes in the simple duties of domestic life! I never saw her to so much advantage. In town she was always at parties; one could never get more than a glimpse of her; but *here* she is not the same person. Sweet girl! how gracefully she moves about in the performance of her little household cares! What a treasure

she would be to a husband! What nice tea she makes! and how pleasant it would be to hear her every night warble one of those beautiful little ballads! And how interesting she looks when she is nursing that little sister of hers! She would look quite angelic with a baby of her own! By G——! I'll propose to-morrow!" And the trick is done.

I am inclined to consider foggy autumn weather as the most seasonable for the Spinster's operations, especially in the country. The damp drizzling "cold water" of everything out of doors, is calculated to lend an ineffable charm to the cheerfulness within; and men like cheerfulness and comfort, especially when dispensed by a lovely and agreeable woman. Besides, summer is a "*dangerous*"—to borrow Rowland's expression, of Macassar notoriety—foe to the Spinster.

When nature has put on the glorious garb of that resplendent season, *her* beauties are too apt to distract attention from inferior ones.

The magnificence of the *Creator* leaves immeasurably behind the fascinations of the *creature*. The birds, with their brilliant melody, leave fearfully in the back ground mortal *roulades*, shakes and quavers ; the sparkle of the crystal streamlet is far more bright than the coquettish glance of the flirt ; and the little vanities, little sentimentalities, and little prettinesses of human life, shrink into their natural and deserved insignificance before the noble and boundless splendours poured down upon us in a dazzling shower by the hand of God.

This is probably the reason why " the London season " always takes place during the most beautiful months of summer. The rivalry of God and nature is too powerful for the meretricious and haggard puppets of the ball-room and the *rout* to contend with, and they are therefore but too glad to escape from the splendour of the country and the music of the birds, to the soot, smoke, gas, and Italian *cantatrices* of London.

The Spinster, then, I am inclined to maintain, is more unerring in her operations, on the whole, in the sort of quiet country place I have described, and in the “weeping” and declining of the year.

To continue: I cannot warn my lady readers too sedulously, not to allow themselves to be led away by the merely superficial advantages of exterior, such as good looks, taste in dress, and polished manners. These are all “vanity of vanities” when put into comparison with the more important requisites of a husband.

To begin with good looks—as I wish to point out the dangers of the above-mentioned allurements *seriatim*—let me reason with my Spinster patronesses seriously and rationally upon the folly of being favourably prejudiced by a handsome face or a graceful figure. What, let me ask you, is there, after all, so irresistible in these attractions? Good looks are no criterion of good temper; and it does not follow that, because a bachelor is an Adonis, he should

also be a meek one ; or that, because he has a perfect Roman nose, he should be easy to lead by that important organ. And I am sure I need not add, that tractability is a most important requisite in a desirable husband. “ Handsome *is* that handsome *does*,” says the proverb, and I am confident that my wise unmarried pupils would far prefer, to a spouse who possessed a comely face but an ugly temper, one who, however devoid of personal attractions, would at least “ do the thing *handsomely* ” in the shape of *cadeaux*, settlements, carriages, and cachemires.

Again: with regard to dress, women are unfortunately so liable, by their natures and inclinations, to be influenced by this miserable consideration, that many a love (?) match has been the triumph, not of Cupid, but of Stultz ; and many a Spinster’s fate has been cut short by the shears, not of the “ weird sisters,” but of the tailor:—

“Hæ nugæ seria ducunt,”

says the Latin line; which has been thus ingeniously done into English by a dandy friend of mine—

“A coat of Nugee’s may lead to serious results.”

But reflect, Spinsters, how very weak you must be to lend such importance to external appearance. For what you know, the very coat you are so much admiring was furnished by the tailor on the promise of being reimbursed by its wearer when he marries the “devilish nice girl who has got some money”—yourself—to whom he is paying his addresses, and who is sure to have him!!”

Besides, ten or twelve hours of *married* life out of the twenty-four are generally consumed by the happy pair, side by side in a four-post bedstead; and were your “intended” the

“glass of fashion and the mould of form” *in* dress, still, when *un*-dressed, like the jay stripped of the peacock’s feathers, or the ass of the lion’s skin, he would—to use a slang expression—become “quite t’other thing;” for the conjugal cotton nightcap of the matrimonial couch would transform Apollo Belvidere himself into a Caliban.

Refinement, too, in manners, though a grand ingredient in the Blessington novels, the Colburn common-places, and the Bentley balderdash, is but a meagre capital on which to start in wedded life. Remember the memorable words of the poet:—

“*Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
And all the rest is leather and prunella.*”

Of course, Spinsters, “worth” must be taken to allude to the *man*, who is “worth” some comfortable thousands of pounds sterling per annum. Do not, then, suffer yourselves to

be caught by such frivolities as those I have been denouncing; of course, good looks, a gentlemanly appearance, and an elegant demeanour, are desirable enough in their way, but they must not be allowed to interfere with that "one thing needful," a "good match."

This very word "match," ladies, suggests a simile to me, which, however homely, may not be without some use in illustrating my subject. The matches employed by an industrious housewife in lighting the fire—and alas! brimstone is not always a simile inapplicable to married life—are not in preference those which "flare up" violently at first, and then die away in a minute, before their profitless flame can be communicated to the wood which they are intended to kindle, but those more sober and steady-going "lucifers," which require a good deal of rubbing, perhaps, before they light up, but when they *are once* lighted, preserve that light long enough to set the carefully-laid chips into a bright and enduring blaze.

So it is with that inflammable animal man. A prudent and far-seeing Spinster will despise the showy but evanescent radiance of passion, while she will unhesitatingly choose the dull and sluggish "match," that, although less impetuous and dazzling at first, is far more durable and profitable in its results to *domestic* purposes.

I shall conclude this chapter by a few verses, which my husband-hunting readers may perhaps find applicable and *à propos*.

THE RING AND THE BROOCH ; OR, THE LADY'S CHOICE.

A SPINSTER'S BALLAD.

I MET him at the County Ball ;
I'd heard of him before,
That he had every year, at least
Three thousand pounds and more.

I cannot say I like him much ;
But what am I to do ?
My mother says—" That Mr. Smith
Is just the match for you !"

I own, if I could make my choice,
I'd greatly sooner wed
Young William Jones, although he's poor,
And has to earn his bread.
He says and writes such pretty things—
But what am I to do ?
My mother says—" That Mr. Smith
Is just the match for you."

I know that money's scarce at home—
Oh, gold ! thou root of ills !—
Papa declares he dreads the day
When he's to " meet " his bills !
I'm sure *I* should not dread to *meet*
My Bill—what can I do ?—
My mother cries—" That Mr. Smith
Is just the match for you."

There's something strange about that Smith,
Though *what*, I cannot say ;
And yet a sweet pearl ring to me
He sent on New-year's-day.
While William gave a plain gold brooch,
Poor, like himself, but true ;
My mother cries—" That Mr. Smith
Is just the match for you !"

Smith wears a glossy olive coat,
With buttons richly chased ;
But William's blue and worn *surtout*
Is much more to my taste.
Smith looks a " snob," while William is
A gentleman, you view ;
But then my mother says—" That Smith
Is just the match for you."

Both ask my hand : which shall I take
For " better and for worse ?"
If vulgar Wealth's a horrid thing,
Still Poverty's a curse.

Smith *versus* Jones—confound the men—

I don't know what to do ;

What say *you*, mother ?—" Stick to Smith,

He's just the match for you !"

Well, wait a minute : I would act

Without the least reproach ;

Shall I return the pretty *ring* ?

Or send back William's *brooch* ?

The ring, you say, is worth the most ?—

Dear mother, that is true !

I'll send the *brooch* back—Smith's the man—

I quite agree with you !

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR DRAWS SKETCHES
FROM HUMAN NATURE—THE WORLDLY MO-
THER—THE COQUETTE.

THE affection of a mother towards her children has been acknowledged and held up to be one of the purest—nay, the very purest—in its nature and devotion that this world affords. All other affections have some taint, however small, of earth about them; and even conjugal love, pure and fervent as it may be, is of course not wholly divested of the grosser instincts of the senses.

But the love of a mother approaches more nearly to what may be imagined as the protect-

ing tenderness of our Heavenly Maker, than any other sentiment which could be cited ; and it is no profanity to assert that there is something *divine* in its nature and its attributes.

From the hour when the child first begins to draw sustenance from the maternal bosom, till the moment when that child closes its parent's eyes on her death-bed—a death-bed whose pangs are soothed by the hope of meeting that dear one in another, brighter, and better world hereafter—the tie between the mother and the child ought to be, and often is, one of the most watchful and holy tenderness on the one side, and the most reverent and affectionate obedience on the other.

Ingratitude, under any and all circumstances, is one of the most hateful vices that can exist, but becomes trebly atrocious when displayed towards a parent ; while the mother who treats with cold neglect, and brutal tyranny, the being to whom she has given birth, is only less guilty than that one who, from the

very cradle, instils into her child the pernicious venom of worldly principles, and educates her daughter for a course of frivolity, manœuvring, and deceit.

The Worldly Mother is, in truth, one of the most detestable fungi that spring up from the rich corruption of society. Like the unnatural and idolatrous Jews, who passed their children through the fire to Moloch, the Worldly Mother sacrifices her offspring to the Moloch of worldly advantage, and worldly dross.—He would be a strange gardener who tended, cultivated, and watered the *weeds*, to promote their growth and their luxuriance; while he carefully eradicated from the garden entrusted to him, every sweet and blooming flower, every valuable and salutary herb.

And yet this is the method pursued by the Worldly Mother. She has, as it were, the garden of her child's heart placed under her care by God: it ought to be her task and her delight to bring to light and encourage the

flowers of purity, innocence, and Christian virtue, of which, even in our fallen state, the beneficent hand of God has mercifully dropped the seeds into our natures ; while her most anxious and minute attention should be directed to root out the noxious weeds of pride, worldliness, and ambition, from the precious soil.

How the Worldly Mother fulfils these duties may be learned from many a broken heart, many a dishonoured bed, and many a despairing death, which have been the bitter harvest of what are denominated in the maternal jargon “ good matches ;” and it is a painful but a notorious truth, that in our days there are few mothers who are *not* worldly ; from the countess, who covets a peer for her son-in-law, to the tradesman’s wife, who aspires to the attainment of a “ real gent.” for her Kitty.

It is the curse and bane of society, whether high or low, that perpetual and unprincipled pursuit of worldly riches, or worldly position,

for the daughters whose happiness, and not whose ambition, should be the end that is sought for in their unions. In a work, therefore, upon Husband-catching, it would be an unpardonable omission, were I not to exhibit a picture of the Worldly Mother, as the Spinster has no more powerful and no more unprincipled auxiliary in her arduous pursuit.

The Worldly Mother, then, is a being whose whole energies are devoted to the attainment of what she calls a "good match" for her daughter or daughters. Every single young, middle-aged, or decrepid man who is introduced to, or meets her daughters in society, becomes immediately the *pointd mire* of this woman's most intense and microscopic scrutiny. Her husband is employed to find out the bachelor's connexions, supposed income, and favourite pursuits; the company to which he resorts, and even the vices to which he is addicted, do not escape this delicate lady's investigations. Should the *parti* be considered

by the Worldy Mother an "eligible" one, the husband is again put into requisition, and is employed as a decoy-duck to allure the bachelor into the house by an invitation to dinner. Once under her own roof, the Worldly Mother pays still more attention to the "illustrious stranger." Before dinner her daughter is lectured something after the following fashion:—

"Lucy, your father has asked Mr. So-and-So to dine here to-day, and I want you to look your best. I have good reason to believe that Mr.— has made a good deal of money in railway shares, and I hear he has bought that fine old place in Worcestershire, which that horrid Lord Spendthrift was obliged to part with the other day." *Verbum sap.* (although Spinsters are by no means *saps* where husband-catching is concerned). Lucy puts on her most becoming dress, gives an extra half-hour to her hair, and enters the drawing-room intent upon conquest.

Her mother endeavours to discover what are her guest's sentiments on any and everything, and Lucy—timidly, of course—joins in the conversation; and employs an occasional—“How very strange: I was saying just the same thing myself the other day, was I not, mamma?”—with more or less effect.

The bachelor takes his leave, quite delighted with the whole family:—“Uncommonly good port that of Thompson's; remarkably pleasant woman his wife; and a d—d fine girl that Lucy. Curious how her tastes and mine seem to hit it. Ahem! I must call and leave a card there to-morrow.” The bachelor accordingly calls next day, does *not* leave a card, but is shown in to Mrs. Thompson and Miss Lucy, the latter, of course, looking bewitching in a simple morning-robe, which lends additional *frâicheur* to her appearance. The afternoon passes away in pleasant conversation, and the Worldly Mother, on retiring to bed that

night, thinks that "the gudgeon has begun to nibble."

The sequel may be guessed. The bachelor's visits become by no means like angels', "few and far between." In due time the question is proposed: he is referred to "papa." Papa approves; the Worldly Mother kisses her son-in-law elect, and, with an admirable attempt at tears, "hopes he will make her Lucy happy;" and assures him "that the dear girl is quite a treasure." The settlements are drawn up satisfactorily; Lucy's spinster friends are invited to the wedding, that they may half die of envy, and—the "good match" is accomplished. How that "good match" may eventually turn out, is of course no business of the Worldly Mother's.

Nor are similarity of disposition and tastes, religious or moral principles, or gentlemanly demeanour, at all indispensables in the Worldly Mother's eyes, towards the attainment of a "good match." "A good match" may have

kept—and keep still—half-a-dozen mistresses ; a “ good match ” may drink like an Irishman, and swear like a trooper; a “ good match ” may be scarcely out of his whipping-tops and teens, or may be a venerable Methuselah hobbling upon crutches; but it is nothing to the Worldly Mother. All that “ is Lucy’s look-out.” Now she has married him, she must manage him as well as she can. *She* (the Worldly Mother) has done *her* duty; her daughter has made “ a good match,” and fifty years ago would have been delighted to have such a chance. Lucy must not expect everything *couleur de rose* in matrimony—all wives have their trials, and Lucy must expect to have things to put up with as well as other people. She can do very well if she pleases, et cætera.

Such is the Mrs. Thompson of the middle class, and such is—with the few trifling modifications of position and circumstances—the Countess Cairn Goram, of fashionable life.

Both are "Worldly Mothers," and both follow the same end by the same means. Even on the score of vulgarity the countess must consent, in this instance, at least, to be upon a par with the city dame. Matchmaking is essentially and throughout a vulgar pursuit; and it matters little in this respect, whether it be carried on by the showily-dressed, flaunting wife of a shopkeeper, or by the elegant and heartless mother, whose haunts are Almacks and the Parks.

Nor is there much difference in the results which too often follow these "good matches," both in the middle and higher classes. Indeed, I am inclined to think that the Mrs. Thompsons have in this somewhat the advantage of fashionable mothers, and that the "good matches" of the former are, upon the whole, rather more likely to "turn out well" than those effectuated by the latter. The shopkeeper's daughter marries at least some man who may, by possibility—vulgar and coarse

though perhaps he is—make a tolerable husband eventually; while the “good match” of the countess’s child is probably some fashionable and titled profligate, or some *millionaire parvenu*, selfish, heartless, contemptible, and vicious, as fashionable men and rich *parvenus* invariably are, almost without a single exception.

Of course, the sketch I have given of the Worldly Mother must be considered as a mere outline, the details of which I must leave to be filled up by my lady readers, from their own filial experience. The subject is a disgusting one, but as the anatomist and the chymist have a useful purpose in dissecting the most loathsome reptiles, and in analyzing the most deadly poisons; so in this Treatise, which is one of *moral* dissection, I should not have done my duty, had I not laid bare that hideous creature the “Worldly Mother,” in the deformity of her nature and the perversity of her instincts. —Faugh!

Turn we now to the study of another being, scarcely less repulsive, scarcely less common, and certainly not less unprincipled than the last—I proceed to a sketch of the “*Coquette*.”

And I shall begin by declaring that in my opinion, however debased a being the *Coquette* may, and must be, considered, she is yet, to those who know how to use her rightly, an instructor by no means to be despised. There is nothing like your regular Flirt to open the eyes and expand the intellect of an inexperienced youth. It is true that he may suffer at first from her heartlessness and treachery; it is true that once, twice—perhaps half-a-dozen times—the *Coquette* may bring the tear to his eye, and the restless dream to his pillow. But these impressions in time wear off, the victim's wounds become cicatrised, and he lives to analyze and laugh at the petty tricks, the fascinating lies, and the calculating *minauderies*, which make up the stock in trade of the Flirt.

The Coquette may charm the fancy for a time; nay, excite the senses for a moment; but her empire is scarcely ever a durable one. The Coquette would wish for no better sport than the broken heart and the maddened brain of her admirers; but her wiles have seldom so complete or romantic an effect in the nineteenth century.

The Spinster who is in search of a husband should to a certain degree become versed in the arts of *coquetterie*, but a too great proficiency in the science will be apt to endanger her success. "*Faut de la moutarde, pas trop n'en faut.*"

The Coquette's glory is in the number of her slaves; the husband-hunting Spinster requires *one* to be her serf. The Coquette aims at catching her "thousands and tens of thousands;" the husband-hunting Spinster aims at the plumpest bird of the covey, and if she brings *him* down, she cares not if the others escape uninjured. The Coquette values the

sex, not the *individual*; the husband-hunting Spinster likes best, of all men, that one whom she can allure to the altar. In a word, round the Coquette's dazzling light swarm a thousand flies, the *ephemeridæ* of life, while the husband-hunting Spinster prefers the one *golden-winged* moth, which, after a few stupid whirls, falls consumed by her charms. And yet there is scarcely a being more depraved than the thorough-bred and thorough-paced Coquette. Like an Atheist, who goes to mass, she adopts the paraphernalia of a creed to which she is an infidel. The languishing glances of her eyes are a mockery; she plays with the senses—like a salamander with the flames—because she knows *she* is proof against their delirium; and she stands unmoved on the brink of the precipice, gazing down into the dizzy depths of passion with the eye of a philosopher and the callousness of an anchorite! Chastity is not her safeguard, for no woman can be *really* chaste whose occupation is to stimulate the

senses. Virtue is not her *ægis*, for no woman can be *really* virtuous, whose want of inclination (and not whose principle) is the safeguard of her honour.

The Coquette prostitutes the noblest attributes of human nature. The sanctity of the church, the tranquillity of the domestic circle, the chamber of grief, and the bed of death, witness her meretricious manœuvres. The minister of God in his pulpit, the gray-headed father in the bosom of his family, the husband weeping over his dying wife, and the son closing the eyes of his departed mother, have been marked as the prey of the Coquette. The gayest of the gay in the ball-room, her witty and brilliant phrases intoxicate her victims, and her perfidious lips can distil the honey of spiritual consolation and the balm of tender sympathy to the mourner and the grief-stricken, who are almost tempted to ask, while they listen to the syren's accents—"Is this an angel that has come among us!" Like the

Wordly Mother, whom we have described, the Coquette is a despicable being; but, unlike the mother, she has not even the excuse of promoting the worldly welfare of those near and dear to her, for there is nothing dear to the Coquette.

We have heard of these women, smitten at last by a real passion, becoming fond, devoted, and exemplary wives; but wo to the man who would be fool enough to take one of these serpents to his bosom. She might nestle there for a time, but she would *sting* at last. Her waist has been clasped by the debauchee—her eyes have drooped not beneath the gaze of the libertine; her dress, her manner, her gestures have been employed to excite the brutal instincts of the profligate and the man of pleasure. A courtesan in all but the one step, which she *dares not* take, because it involves the loss of reputation, and of the dazzling triumphs of society, she is without the courtesan's plea of necessity for her vileness.

A Coquette who with marriage in view suddenly becomes converted into a decorous and timid woman, is merely acting a part, like the Jew in a Mussulman country, who turns Mahometan to preserve his gold or his skin. There is this difference, however, that the Coquette's conversion is not to *retain*, but to *procure* gold, or its equivalent, in the wealthy or distinguished match which she becomes a hypocrite to ensure.

In the present degraded state of English society, where jaded senses and enervated minds require some extreme stimulant—however pernicious—to raise them from their lethargy, and to dispel the torpor of *ennui*, which hangs like a fog over the most fashionable *ré-unions*, and the most exclusive “gatherings together,” the Coquette must be tolerated as a necessary evil. A woman with plain good sense, intellectual and refined soul, and modest demeanour, would stand but little chance of achieving a “good match.”

To talk *à tort et à travers* upon every subject, from religion to the Corn-laws, to utter the most startling paradoxes, and to excite surprise from the very shamelessness displayed in manner and conversation, is the true art of making "a sensation" now-a-days. Green-horns are attracted by so miraculous an exhibition; they naturally conceive, that under such a brilliant and *fashionable* exterior, there must lie concealed some magic talisman of superior virtue, to produce so bewildering an effect; and the old Latin sentence, *omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, holds good in the case of the Coquette, as in many others. Raise the veil from the pretended deity, and catch a glimpse at the grinning and senseless idol that is beneath—the illusion vanishes, the mirage is dispelled, and you recognise, with loathing and contempt, the heartless, passionless, and degraded Flirt.

Enough of this *prosaic* anatomy of a "subject" so disgusting, and let me end the chapter with a few appropriate "poetics."

MY MOTHER!

A SINGLE LADY'S LAMENT.

Who brought me forth one happy day,
And to my flattered sire did say,
“ My dear, she's just your own *portrait* ?”

My Mother!

Who, though a Christian parent styled,
Ne'er suckled me, her own dear child,
For fear her figure should be spoiled ?—

My Mother!

Who from my earliest years took care
To let me know that I was fair ;
And dressed me smart, and curled my hair ?—

My Mother!

Who, when I grew to riper age,
And turned the leaf of girlhood's page,
Foretold my charms would be “ the rage ?”

My Mother!

Who, with instruction wisely kind,
Trained up my young, inquiring mind,
To lay deep snares for all *man-kind* ?"—

My Mother !

Who bade me lay aside and shun
The heart's best instincts, every one,
Because the *heart* is—*malvais-ton* !—

My Mother !

Who vowed I must, to be the pet
Of fashion's men, and fashion's set,
Become, like her, a cold coquette ?—

My Mother !

Who said—" Be this your future plan,
" My girl, make conquests when you can ;
Don't *pray to God*, but *prey on*—man !"—

My Mother !

Who had me taught to waltz with grace,
And dance, without a blushing face,
The polka's meretricious pace ?—

My Mother !

Who brought me "out" at seventeen,
When I became the worshipped queen
Of all the fools in fashion's scene?—

My Mother!

Who cautioned me, all things above,
To never think or dream of love;
To be the *hawk*, and not the *dove*!—

My Mother!

Who always watched in great affright,
For fear I should be caught some night
By handsome face and pockets light?—

My Mother!

Who bids me worthy men refuse,
That I may marry if I choose;
"Because," she says, she's "higher views?"—

My Mother!

Who's shown me off five seasons now,
Till every soul my face does know,
And dandies whisper, "Tis no go!"—

My Mother!

Who does not mark my cheek grow pale,
My health give way, my spirits fail,
Because I feel I'm getting "stale?"—
My Mother!—

Who'll keep me fiddle-faddling on,
Till bloom and beauty both are gone
From face and form, and then—I'm done!—
My Mother!

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON HUSBAND-CATCHING
—VARIETIES OF BACHELORS—THE SPOONEY
—THE GOOD YOUNG MAN.

WHEN an incipient angler is about to proceed on a day's fishing, and turns to some treatise on the piscatorial art, for instructions which may conduce to his success, many and numerous are the precepts which he will find laid down, according to the nature of the particular fish that he wishes to bag.

He is told that the voracious jack is to be taken by the live minnow or the gudgeon; that the perch is seldom insensible to the attractions of a "well-scoured brandling;" and that

"heavy" roach will at times bite most greedily at scientifically-compounded paste. No one bait is mentioned as infallible in *all* cases, but the tyro is told to adapt his baits so as to suit the tastes and appetites of each individual fish. So it is with the more important sport of husband-catching.

There are as many *genera* of men as of fishes. Some men, indeed, are remarkably "*odd-fishes*," and the bait which the Spinster must use with infallible success in one instance, would not even succeed in producing a nibble in another. Husband-catching requires a very nice discrimination, and very tempting baits indeed, to be followed with any pleasure or profit.

It is true that you sometimes see the smart cockney angle on the banks of a river, casting the fly, or throwing in the ground-bait for hours together, using the most perfect tackle, and provided from head to foot with all the most approved "appliances" of the sport, and

yet he does not make one finny prisoner; while close to him, perhaps, a dirty-faced country lad pulls out fish after fish with no other tackle but a hedge-stick, a bit of string, a crooked pin, and the tail of a worm.

So, too, one may perchance see the Spinster use all the most consummate arts of husband-catching, but in vain; the fascinating glance, the sunny smile, the well-turned ankle, nay, the beautifully-rounded leg, may be all employed in their turns, and all fail; while some artless and unsophisticated girl, ignorant of waltzing and unconscious of the polka, carries off the bachelor before the very eyes of her accomplished but disappointed rival. These, however, are but exceptions to the general rule, and well-directed science will, in the long run, win the victory, whether the victims sought for be the scaly denizens of the crystal waters, or the two-legged animals who rejoice in the name of man.

Matrimony is a pill which it requires some

gilding to make at all palatable to a bachelor's swallow. It is a resignation of all the "wrong but pleasant" sweets which appertain to "single blessedness." It is a cage whose bars must be concealed as delicately as possible; a kind of abdication, in short, of all the privileges, immunities, and small delights which make the bachelor the happiest fellow in the world—when he is not the most miserable.

No single man would be inclined to barter the certainty of his present careless and *nonchalant* condition, for the uncertain pleasures of a Benedict, unless believing that he would be a gainer by the exchange; and to induce that belief is the business of the husband-catching Spinster. She must study the disposition, the foibles, and the character of her intended victim, calmly, coldly, and scientifically.

Women have a natural—I might say an instinctive—penetration, which is of wondrous service to them in these matters. Their na-

tive and intuitive discernment becomes so sharpened by education, and the constant attention which they bestow upon husband-catching, that even the most astute men are liable to be caught by their fair but insidious adversaries.

Some Spinsters have even been so lucky, or so skilful, as to turn positive indifference into as positive ardour; actual aversion, into as actual predilection.

Let my unmarried lady-readers, then, study attentively the individuals of the *genus homo* whom they are bent upon captivating; let them recollect that their object is not merely the agreeable but unmeaning flattery which all well-educated men deem it their duty to pour into a woman's ear, but the more tangible and profitable result of a true *bonâ fide* offer; let them bear in mind that it is not a partner for the next quadrille, but a partner for *life*, that they have to ensure; not a ball-room beau, but

a "bed and board" companion, that their efforts must be directed to attain.

Half the matches which are broken off would have been brought to their expected and legitimate issue, if the Spinster had only known how to *manage* her "intended." The lords of the creation are, after all, very tame lions, easily ruled by a female Van Amburgh, and soon brought to sacrifice the Magna Charta of male independence, if the fair despot has wit enough to establish her tyranny by gentle and treacherous advances, and not to attempt a *vi et armis* occupation of the territory.

I have heard men boast of their knowledge and experience of match-making mothers, and matrimonially-inclined misses; I have heard them describe, with a look of ineffable self-sufficiency, the snares they have discovered, the ambushes they have evaded, the plots which they have foiled; but these very braggarts themselves have been the first to be caught by the well-concealed baits of some

ingenious Spinster. They have relied too much upon the pretended cuirass of worldly knowledge, which defended their *hearts*, forgetting that through the fine-wove links which protect the *heart*, a clever woman has still the power of shooting a thousand darts which can reach the fancy or the *senses*.

Every Achilles has a vulnerable part, and it is the prudent Spinster's business and duty to discover and to aim at that one unprotected spot. One of the greatest dangers incurred by a Spinster in the chase of man, is the risk of her own heart and her own feelings becoming so excited in that pleasing pursuit, that zeal outruns discretion, and she loses the tempting fruit from her too great eagerness in grasping at it.

As far as *heart* and *feelings* are concerned, however, the Spinster of modern times need feel no great alarm on this score. The precepts and principles, industriously instilled into her by a Worldly Mother, the ossification which a

course of "society" is almost sure to induce, where the heart or the soul is concerned, are generally more than sufficient guarantees, that the fair creature will not allow her matrimonial projects to be interfered with or upset, by any extravagant and unfashionable ebullition of sentiment or sincerity.

Bachelors, however, are not quite so easy a prey, as to require no variety in the allurements held out to ensnare them. The *genera* of unmarried males are many, and of course each individual species will require to be inveigled and noosed by methods the most adapted to its own peculiar tastes and weaknesses.

I premise, then, that a treatise on Husband-Catching, to be complete and profitable, must instruct its gentle readers, as far as possible, concerning the different kinds of that animal, which it is their purpose to pursue, and, if possible, to capture.

I shall have, in a subsequent chapter, to say a few words about *widowers*, but I shall con-

fine myself at present to an investigation of *bachelors*, properly so called, and shall endeavour, as succinctly, but as lucidly as possible, to give my fair pupils some insight into the nature and peculiarities of each most prominent class of these most solitary bipeds.

Let the ladies—the unmarried ones at least—mark this and the following chapters: it cannot do them harm to hear the lucubrations of an old bachelor upon his brother-bachelors, and they may learn some useful hints from these lessons of moral anatomy. The two subjects of the *genus* bachelor I have selected for the present chapter are, “The Spooney,” and “The Good Young Man.”

And first, “the Spooney.” This species of bachelor is a very common one, and is to be met with in all places where bachelors do “congregate.” He is found at Almacks and at the county ball; soaring among the highest realms of fashion, and “dining off plate” in the *bourgeois* localities of Russel Square or Blooms-

bury. The Spooney's age varies from twenty to about thirty-five; after that epoch in his existence he either merges into matrimonial insignificance, or becomes included in the category of "elderly or old bachelors." In the former case, we have of course nothing more to do with him here; in the latter, he will find his appropriate *niche* in a subsequent chapter of this treatise.

The Spooney, without being a positive idiot, is yet so naturally imperfect in his moral faculties, that he succeeds in but few undertakings; and even where he is successful, it is so clearly a matter of hazard, that he derives no credit from the fact. If the Spooney goes out hunting, he is sure to be deposited in the muddiest ditch; if he shoots, he either kills his pointer instead of the partridge, or irretrievably damages the eye or nose of his companion; if he dines out, he gets drunk, and is cross and stupid "in his cups;" if he is addressing a lady, he talks about "the weather," or "the crops."

The Spooney is not without ambition ; but his very ambition shows him to still greater disadvantages. The coat which is becoming to another man, would sit in wrinkles innumerable upon the Spooney's back, even were the outward conformation of the men one and the same ; if he is reading out a piece of exquisite poetry, he is sure to lay the emphasis on a wrong word, or to declare, in the middle of a sublime passage, that he " can't say he exactly understands *that*," if the mistress of the house asks him to carve a pheasant at a dinner party, he is sure to let the fork slip, and to splash the gravy in her face. If the Spooney asks some bachelor friend to his lodgings, the coffee is sure to be gritty, the cigars cabbage leaves, and the brandy British.

In his very vices—for the Spooney has, or affects vices—he is the same male " Mala-prop ;" if he drinks hard, he is sure to be caught pulling off a knocker, and equally sure to give his *real* name instead of the conventional

"Smith" or "Johnson," before the magistrate next morning; if he keeps a mistress, she bestows her favours upon his "tiger;" if he gets up an intrigue with a married lady, the husband is sure to catch him in the coal-cellar, or to get ten thousand pounds damages against him in an action for *crim. con.* Nothing can make the Spooney other than ridiculous—

"You may teach, you may lecture the man if you will,
But the stamp of the 'Spoon' will be seen in him still."

If the Spooney has virtues, they will, like his vices, bring out his "spoonishness" into still greater relief. In his filial affection, he would recommend a black dose to his "mamma" on her death-bed, and he would console a bereaved husband by saying to him, "Don't take on so, my good fellow; there are plenty more good women in the world."

If the Spooney has a cold, his nose is sure to be redder than anybody else's; if he is a

penniless younger son, he is certain to marry a girl without a farthing, and to have half a dozen children; if rich, and his estate is to devolve, in default of issue, upon some distant and detested relation, the Spooney's wife is sure to be barren; if he commit suicide in a fit of romantic despair he does the "fearful act" in some most absurd place, or in some most absurd manner; drinks the oxalic acid (in the pantry) which was purchased to clean his boot-tops, or throttles himself in bed with a worsted stocking.

With all his imperfections, the Spooney is not to be "sneered at" by a discriminating Spinster:

"A man's a man for a' that."

Let her not, however, look upon the Spooney as a too easy conquest; and by placing too much reliance on *his* weakness, lose perhaps a victim, which a little more care and attention on her part might have ensured.

The Spooney is by no means a too tractable animal. He has a temper of his own, and is very apt to be vicious, unless perfectly managed ; for it is one of the Spooney's characteristics to think a coarse fit of passion indicative of a manly spirit ; mulish obstinacy the proof of an honourable firmness—"justum et tenacem," etc. ;—and stolid sulkiness, the sign of a dignified reserve.

The Spinster, in order to establish a firm dominion over the Spooney, must find out and flatter his predominant ambition. If the Spooney considers wit to be his *forte*, let the Spinster disclose "two rows of pearls set in coral" at every trite and well-worn joke which he attempts ; if he affects the reputation and *allures* of a sportsman, let her compliment him upon his boldness at the leap, or his expertness with the gun, asserting that "if rumour speaks true—" the Spooney has a great respect for *rumour*, for it is a kind of celebrity—he is indeed a second Nimrod ; if he sets up for a

man of pleasure, let her—again appealing to rumour—let her remonstrate with him, half admiringly, and half reprovably, upon the number and the *eclat* of his intrigues.

By thus humouring the Spooney's principal foible, the Spinster will in time render herself necessary to his comfort, when laughed at—which he infallibly will be—by the rest of the world; he will naturally recur to the consoling thought that there is one at least who appreciates him, and his reflections upon this subject will probably be condensed some morning into the following brief, but pithy and expressive sentence—"By jingo! *that* woman understands me, and I can't do better than marry her at once."

Let us now proceed to an analysis of that species of bachelor known as "the Good Young Man."

The Good Young Man, though endowed himself with a *quantum suff.* of spoonishness,

is yet essentially different from the Spooney in his habits and pursuits.

The Good Young Man is peculiarly harmless and inoffensive in his ways ; he does not affect any fashionable vice as a pedestal to his native insignificance ; and there is more milk and water in his composition, than of any other more deleterious compound.

The Good Young Man began life by a placid infancy and childhood, indulging in mere *piano* squalls, breaking fewer tops, and soiling a less number of pinafores, than other urchins of his age.

The Good Young Man was not riotous or cruel in his boyish sports ; *he* never spun cock-chafers on a pin, shod the cat with walnut shells, or threw crackers at the post-boy on his return from school in the holyday “ yellow-rattle ;” but contented himself, in the way of amusement, with keeping tame rabbits, and walking out with his sisters—if he had any. At college he went regularly

to chapel, drank tea with the tutors, never got drunk, broke a lamp, or kissed his bed-maker's daughter.

The Good Young Man has a pious horror of bills, pays ready money for everything, does not smoke, because he thinks it an idle and dissipated habit, and cigars make him sick; reads travels in Abyssinia; but not French novels—because he don't understand the idiom—and is generally in bed by ten o'clock every night.

The Good Young Man is no Brummel or D'Orsay in his dress; his coat has always a "seedy" look; the sleeves are too short, displaying a graceful border of flannel, waistcoat round his wrists; he wears false collars, a darned black silk cravat, "Oxford-mixed" trousers—with no straps—and gray worsted stockings, with thick laced-up shoes, in the winter. He is never seen with studs or a ring—unless a mourning one, bequeathed to him with a legacy, by an old aunt—his red

hands are covered with Berlin gloves, and when he rides—if he *does* ride—his pantaloons are always half way up his legs.

The Spinster must be warily upon her guard while endeavouring to circumvent the “Good Young Man.” The slightest freedom in manner or demeanour, an expression of unpardoned levity, is sufficient to *affroncher* the somewhat prudish susceptibilities of the being we are describing.

The “Good Young Man” has always a great deference for the opinions of his family ; it behoves the fair plotter, therefore, to get “papa,” and “mamma,” on her side.

Beauty has but little effect upon the “Good Young Man.” “Solid qualities” are his requisites for a wife ; his ideas of domestic felicity have nothing of romance about them. “Principles,” he will tell you, “are the *sine qua non*.”

The “Good Young Man” is seldom caught by a fashionable Spinster ; it is the demure

and meek-looking damsels that do most execution among this tribe of bipeds.

The "Good Young Man" is not precisely a fool, but never a genius; he may love common sense, but he never has much intellect; he may be *au fait* to the little decorums of life, but the feelings and passions which give the true *cayenne* zest, and are the veritable *sauce piquante* of existence, are a sealed book to him. Do not, then, my fair pupil, attempt the dazzling system with *him*. Aim at no sublime heights in your conversation with *him*, but let your phrases, in lieu of art and originality, bear the less brilliant but more appropriate impress of modern common-place. Let your dress be simple and unexpensive; and wear long petticoats, for the "Good Young Man" cares not for a well-turned ankle.

Take especial care to be continually praising the pleasures of a domestic and retired life; allude with bewitching zeal, and yet with a *tartuffe* diffidence, to the enthusiastic but im-

portant duties which devolve upon the really conscientious wife; express a kind of charitable wonder how thoughtless women can so lightly take upon themselves the responsibilities of that "awful state;" and hint—but of course with a proper degree of maiden delicacy—at the ineffable delight which a virtuous mother must feel at watching her children grow up in the practice of all those moral excellences which adorn their father, and at the pure and holy rapture which a devoted wife experiences, while uniting her efforts to those of her husband, in the sweet task of educating their "pledges" to follow the bright example that is set before them.

Pursue this plan, Spinster, and you will probably hook the "Good Young Man."

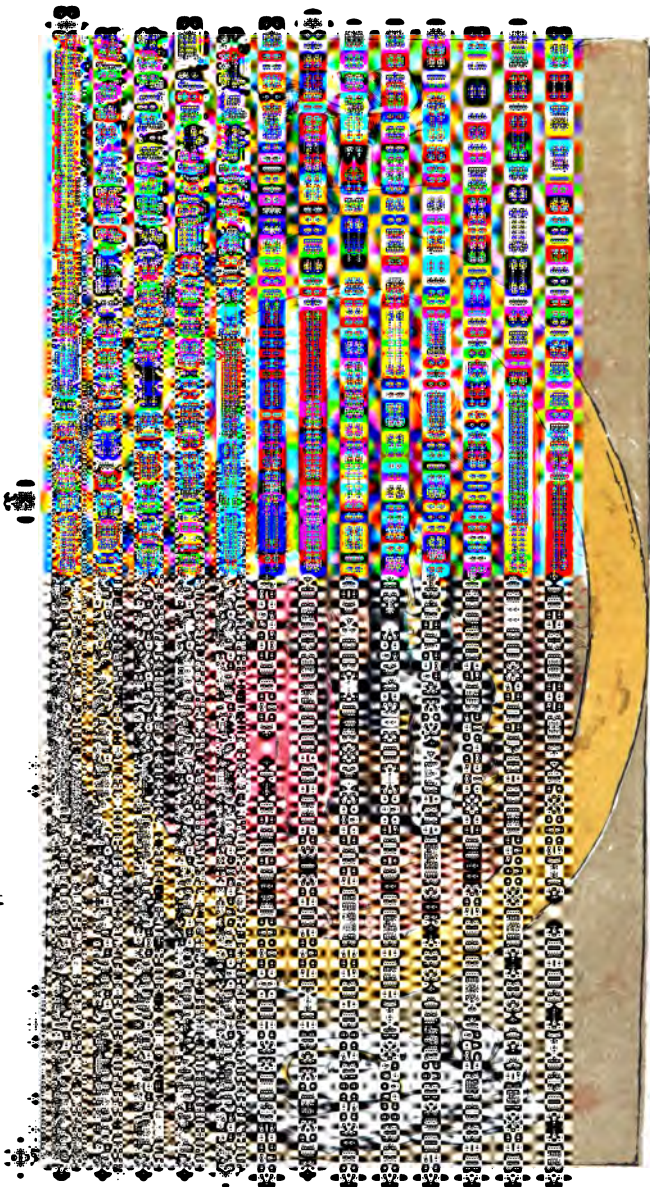
And now listen to the bard:—

“ HE’S SUCH A GOOD YOUNG MAN ! ”

A BALLAD.

He does not talk of love to me ;
He does not praise my charms ;
My flashing eye, my rosy lip,
The contour of my arms.
But then, he’s money in the stocks—
I’ll catch him if I can ;
Besides, there is another thing—
He’s such a—good young man !

His features are not very fine ;
His figure has no grace :
His nails are always black, and there
Are pimples on his face :
But then, his “ principles ” are pure ;
I’ll catch him if I can :
What’s pimpled face to moral mind ?
He’s such a—good young man !



1

1



His conversation boasts no wit ;
No brilliant thoughts adorn
The topics which he talks about ;
Indeed, he makes me yawn.
But all is *moral* that he says ;
I'll catch him if I can :
Your wits are often—profligates,
But *he's* a—*good* young man !

He does not dress extremely well,
But what of that ?—one knows
Fine feathers hide the foulest birds,
And scamps are often beaux.
I know he has intrinsic worth ;
I'll catch him if I can :
His heart's " the thing"—though *not* his coat—
He's such a—*good* young man !

You say he wears " false collars ;" well,
What's that to me or you ?
His *collars* may be *false*, but oh !
His *soul*, I'm sure, is *true*.

What though his *hat's* a gossamer ?

I'll catch him if I can ;

And buy silk *bonnets* with his cash—

He's such a—*good* young man !

'Tis a great a thing in married life

To know your bliss doth stand

On Virtue's rock based firmly, not

On Passion's shifting sand!

And such with *him* would be my lot;

I'll catch him if I can :

For Jane (my sister)'s after him—

He's such a *good* young man !

CHAPTER V.

ADDITIONAL VARIETIES OF BACHELORS—THE
YOUNG MAN IN A PROFESSION—THE SHY
YOUNG MAN—THE GENIUS.

THE "Young Man in a Profession" is another of the bachelor *genus* by no means rare to be met with. The "Young Man in a Profession" is a title as commonly applied to some poor briefless barrister, whose "professional" profits would not suffice to pay his washerwoman's bill; or to some starving wretch of a country curate, as it is to the cleverer or more fortunate youth, whom interest with the ministry may have smuggled into some lucrative legal "commissionership,"

or family connexions have comfortably installed in all the luxuries of a fat living.

The "Young Man in a Profession" acquires a certain adventitious importance, which is as absurd as it is profitless. People are apt to talk of him as a "hard-working fellow, who must get on in time;" and to draw favourable and flattering comparisons between him and "So and So, who idles away all his life." This empty credit, however, is but too often all the advantage derived by the "Young Man in a Profession" from his professional character. Nay, in a great many instances, the very fact of this same "profession" turns eventually to the detriment of the unfortunate individual. The kind-hearted world will, in due course of time, should the "young man" *not* "get on," pronounce him a fool, and attribute the want of success—which is probably owing to want of interest, of impudence, or rascality—to his own natural dulness or "incapacity for

."

I should not advise my Spinster readers to put much faith upon this species of bachelor, unless the "professional" prospects are of the very brightest.

The "Young Man in a Profession," especially if he has his bread to make by it—is generally too much engrossed by his pursuits, to become much of a lady's man, and too *distracted* to be an agreeable lover.

The only advantage about the "Young Man in a Profession," considered in a marital point of view, is that, when he has become a Benedict, his "profession" will keep him away during a considerable part of the twenty-four hours, and so relieve his "better half" from much of the *ennui* that is sometimes attendant upon a conjugal *tête-à-tête*. Should the Spinster suffer her affections to be won by a "Young Man in a Profession," she must make up her mind to a second floor in cheap lodgings, a baked shoulder of mutton and potatoes "done under the meat" for dinner, a maid-

of-all-work, and tallow candles every night throughout the week, except on Sundays, when "composite" may perhaps be ventured on without a dread of insolvency.

Come we now to the "Shy Young Man." This individual is a far more desirable prize, generally speaking, than the "Young Man in a Profession." The "Shy Young Man" may possess all kinds of worldly advantages, with no other drawback than his "shyness." He may have plenty of money, good looks, may dress unexceptionably, and, in short, be an eligible *parti* in every respect. The "Shy Young Man," then, in my humble opinion, should be as carefully looked after by a prudent Spinster, as the stray woodcock is by the sportsman. The usual characteristics of the bachelor may be described as follows. He enters a drawing-room as if he were ascending a scaffold, where Jack Ketch is to "do the honours." The most brilliant rose would be shamed by the carnation of his cheeks, when

he is addressed in society, and when he *does* attempt to originate a topic of conversation, there is a nervous twitching about his face, which puts you in mind of St. Vitus's dance, or the *tic-doloureux*. He never knows what to do with his hands or his feet; the former are generally employed in twirling about his hat, or smoothing down his hair, while the latter indulge in various, strange, and eccentric shufflings. He colours under the delusion—and this delusion is shared by many pigmy great men, and many Lilliputian nations in the world—that “the eyes”—not of all Europe, “but of all the company in the room,” are fixed in malicious and satirical attention upon *him*. His very shyness brings upon him the mishap, and disadvantages, which self-possession and *savior-vivre* would enable him to avoid. In his anxiety to get out of the way, and to make himself as small as possible, he crushes the tail of some dowager's lap-dog, upsets a servant with a *plateau* of ices, or treads upon the

gouty toe of the master of the house. If he takes refuge in some apparently deserted room, from the glare of the brilliant *salon*, he is sure to interrupt some tender *tête-à-tête*, or to detect the lady hostess in replacing a fallen "bustle," or in re-arranging some false curl that has unfortunately slipped from "the ranks."

The "Shy Young Man's" tortures are inconceivable. *He* is sure to be selected as the partner of the most dashing *belle* in the Polka, shoved in as a make-up in a rubber of whist with two surly old dowagers and a gouty ambassador, or called upon to join in a duet with the amateur *cantatrice* most addicted to *roulades* of the whole assembly. His male acquaintances delight in asking him to dinner; making him drunk with brandied port, and cabbage-leaf cigars. The poor wretch flatters himself that the juice of the grape, and the fumes of the "Havannah" (!) will give him the *aplomb* in which he is so lamentably deficient;

and they then add a pair of mustaches to his personal attractions, with burnt cork, and kindly observe, “ *What* a Moll-coddle that fellow is !”

As regards the special object of this Treatise, I have a strong conviction that the “ Shy Young Man ” is one of the easiest, if not *the* easiest victims which a Spinster of tolerable acumen can select. The mode of proceeding with the “ Shy Young Man,” so as to bring him to the altar of matrimony, is simple, and extremely practicable. The Spinster should—unalarmed by his *sauvagerie*—throw herself as much as possible—not into his arms, he would be too shy at first to know what to do with her—but into his society; and yet she must do this in such a way as not to scare the victim by a too great *empressément*. She should, if *Husband*-hunting may borrow a term from *badger*-hunting, gradually, and with discrimination, “ draw him out;” encourage him by a few simple topics judiciously started, and

narrowly followed up; in short, make him feel "at home" in her society. This method is almost infallible: the "Shy Young Man" naturally becomes attached to the fair being who converses with, without confusing him, and soon begins to look, amid the feared and detested crowd, for the gentle enchantress, whose encouraging smile acts upon and thaws the frostwork of his shyness with the magic of a sunbeam.

I may throw out as a valuable hint, on taking my leave of the "Shy Young Man," that he would be bitterly offended if he fancied his shyness were considered as such. The adroit Spinster therefore will lead him to believe, if possible—and the thousand and one weapons in a woman's arsenal of Coquetry will easily enable her to do so—that, in *her* eyes, his blushes are an eloquent proof of his shame at the follies of his fellow-creatures; his *gaulcherie*, dignified reserve, and his silence, an indication of the profound contempt with which

a mind like *his* must view all the topics and small-talk of common-place society.

The "Shy Young Man" has his vanity, like every one else, and it is his ambition to have his *mauvaise honte* considered as superciliousness, and his embarrassment as the sign of an invisible superiority.

In the due order of things I shall now proceed to a description of that *genus* of bachelor which is called a *Genius*.

Genius is a word that has been much proscribed in all ages, and never more than in our own: the fact is, the present era furnishes us with no worthy successors to that divine gift of "genius" which we worship in a Shakspeare, a Fielding, and a Byron.

Real "genius," then, lives only in the "glorious giants" of the past; but "*the* Genius" is a very common kind of biped at the present day. The "Genius" generally is a precocious creature, and makes his *début* very early upon the scene. If the "Genius" is (to borrow a com-

mercial expression,) in the "poetical line," he has written an "Ode to a Dead Canary bird," when he—the "Genius," *not* the canary bird—was seven years old; or, in riper age, has inserted in the county paper some "Lines to my Deceased Grandmother," in which his sorrows are pleasingly expressed in some such rhymes as these :—

"Poor grandmama! thy dust has gone to dust,
And yet the poet should not mourn the just,"
Etc., etc.

If the "Genius" deals in prose, he has, perhaps, before well out of his teens, published by subscription a sixpenny pamphlet—which no one reads (not even the subscribers); or has furnished some loyal town-council with an address of congratulation upon the birth of some new prince or princess.

The "Genius" is, by nature and disposition, utterly selfish, and inordinately conceited. He erects himself into a self-imagined deity, and

is excessively angry if meaner and less brilliantly endowed mortals hesitate to "bow the knee and worship." There is no more thoroughly useless being upon the earth than the "Genius." If he is in a profession, he is, of course, too sublime to attend to the dull mechanical routine of business, and consequently is a barrister without a brief, a physician without a patient, or a clergyman without a living; if in parliament, he is never the originator of any new and admirable measure conducive to the welfare of his country and his fellow-creatures, but fiddle-faddles with absolute laws, and brings forward motions for the repeal of the "Mortmain" Acts.

Sometimes the "Genius" favours the world with a volume of his "Fancies," at others of his historical reminiscences. In the one there is as little of graceful "fancy," as in the other of "historical" research; at others, he scribbles verses for the "Book of Beauty," or writes silly rhymes in the "Court Journal,"

to some glaring *débutante* of the "season." As regards the fair sex, he either affects a cynical and Rabelaisian materialism, pretending to consider woman as the mere slave of domestic drudgery and sensual gratification—a useful article in the bedroom or the kitchen—or else he adopts a chivalrous and Don Quixotic style in attending to her, and professes his belief that she is an angel dropped from the skies, an ethereal excellence, too pure, too holy, too divine, to be sullied by earthly passion. Somewhat similar are the "Genius's" ideas—when he *has* an idea—on the subject of religion. He either loves to *afficher* a sarcastic scepticism, quotes incessantly the well-known lines—

"The priest continues what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man!"

and alludes with admiration to Voltaire, and Rousseau—or he flies with enthusiastic zeal to

the absurd mysticisms and mistaken tenets of Catholic Rome! the dazzling and the magnificent!

The "Genius," my charming Spinster, is by no means a difficult prey to entrap. In the exalted sublimity of his intellectual powers, he may attempt to sneer at matrimony, and cite the immortal Pope as his authority, that—

"Love, free as air, at sight of human ties
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies."

But, *au fond* he is a very domestic being. Your surest baits are *flattery*, and a kind of humble adoration—*no* flattery is too gross for the "Genius" to swallow. If you can quote some of his verses, remember by heart a passage from his last prose lucubration, or yourself indite a few admiring rhymes—never mind the *reason* or the *metre*—addressed to him, and establishing an ingenious parallel between himself and Shakspeare, Byron,

Addison, or Sterne, I will wager ten to one on your success, especially if you have a few hundreds—or thousands—per annum to increase the efficacy of your endeavours; for with all his sublimity, and all his contempt for “earthly things,” believe me; there is no greater admirer of the “yellow dross” than our friend the “Genius.”

This chapter is concluded, and I think I hear you, my fair readers, “calling upon” the author “for a song.”

THE “GENIUS.”

THE ADMIRING LAY OF A SPINSTER.

Oh! have you heard my “Genius” talk?

He’s really quite sublime;

There never was such prose as his,

There never was such rhyme.

He calls my eyes two stars at night ;
Two brilliant suns by day—
He is a " Genius," sure enough !
How then can I say " Nay ?"

He says the world's grown " old," and dull,
And that it should, forsooth,
Be in " Medea's Cauldron " placed,
And boiled again to youth.
I don't know what he means ; it is
Some fine thought, I dare say—
For Tom's a " Genius," sure enough !
How then can I say " Nay ?"

He vows his " soul " on " soaring wings"
Is " longing " to be off ;
I hope he's not about to die—
I never hear him cough.
He plays his part at dinner well,
And at the luncheon tray—
He is a " Genius," sure enough !
How then can I say " Nay ?"

He's so superior in his thoughts !

He looks with lofty scorn

On all the " great ones of the earth,"

The rich and nobly born

He says the Poet is " divine,"

All other men but clay—

He *is* a " Genius," sure enough !

How then can I say " Nay ?"

All down his back his long hair falls,

Which, though it lends *him* grace,

Doth to his *coat* much *grease* impart—

He's reddish in the face ;

A black moustache, a pointed beard,

White kids, an air *distrain*—

He *is* a " Genius," sure enough !

And oh ! I *won't* say " Nay !"

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD BACHELOR—THE RAKE.

I SHOULD pronounce the "Old Bachelor" to be one of the most arduous conquests which a Spinster's tactics can achieve. It is true that "old bachelor" is often synonymous with "old fool," but yet there is such an ingrained crust of selfishness, such a coating of distrust about the "Old Bachelor," that he is not unfrequently impervious to the best-directed attacks. The "Old Bachelor" has his own set of whims, ways, and fancies, the creations of his idleness and *desueurement*, and the very name of "wife" is enough to startle him from his propriety, when he reflects that the *conjunco* of

matrimony would probably drive all his cherished schemes into "thin air." He argues something after this fashion:—"Here am I, comfortably ensconced in my arm-chair by the fire, my pipe or my cigar between my lips, and my bottle of port at my elbow. I shall go to bed when I feel sleepy, and I shall get up to-morrow morning when I feel inclined. What more do I want? What good would a wife be to me? She would call my tobacco a "nasty habit," would abrogate my bottle of Oporto, under the pretence of its being unwholesome or unfashionable; would make *me* go to bed when *she* felt sleepy, and get up when she was tired of her pillow. A wife is but a woman after all, and what is more trying to one's temper, I should like to know, than a woman? There is old Margaret, my housekeeper; she puts me into a passion half a dozen times in the day, but then at least I *can* get rid of her if I choose; I have but to give her warning and pay her

her wages—and this is probably the reason why I go on keeping her so long. But a wife is quite another thing; you can't get rid of *her*. No, no, I'll keep as I am."

Such, ladies, or something like it, is the tenour of the "Old Bachelor's" reflections, when the subject of matrimony recurs to him in his meditative hours. And, between ourselves, is he so far *wrong*?"

The "Old Bachelor" is in some things as affected and absurd as the most beardless fop, who plays with a "clouded cane," and boasts of his intimacy with a fashionable actress whom he has never seen except upon the boards. The "Old Bachelor" has a horror of pet-dogs, and pets of all descriptions—except, perhaps, some *pet-ticoat*, whom he keeps in a snug little suburban villa, and who takes his money, while she laughs, with some younger lover, at the "old fogie" behind his back. The "Old Bachelor" is generally irritable in the extreme; he glares like a demon at the unlucky flunky,

who knocks two glasses together upon the side-board, and retires to his own room—like Achilles to his tent—when the mistress of the house rings for the footman and the coal-scuttle. The “Old Bachelor” does not shoot, because he dislikes the noise of the gun; does not hunt, because the huntsman’s “Tally-ho,” makes his—the “Old Bachelor’s,” not the huntsman’s—head ache, and detests angling, because he gets the hooks into his fingers. The “Old Bachelor” professes contempt for the literature of the present day, and reads no modern works but the “Edinburgh” or the “Quarterly”—according to his politics; though he may perhaps take up occasionally a volume of Lord Mahon’s, or the “Diaries of the Earl of Malmesbury,” because the one is “historical,” and he hopes to find in the other some old tale of scandal relating to his “contemporaries.” The “Old Bachelor,” has generally a *penchant* for grumbling, and attends Tattersall’s and Epsom races;

not that he knows anything about horses, or cares for the sports of the turf, but because he wants a kind of break in his bachelor existence, a sort of periodical splash in the stagnant puddle of his solitary and selfish *ennui*.

From the above description of the "Old Bachelor's" *physiologie* my gentle readers will readily understand that he is a prize which it will require some dexterity and adroitness to captivate—your method must of course vary according to the *particular* species of Old Bachelor of which you are in chase. If he is some fretful, irritable individual, with a bad constitution and a worse temper, you should endeavour, by a series of unobtrusive, yet expressive little attentions, to bring him gradually into the belief that you are indispensable to his comfort. Being—as I believe I previously hinted—essentially selfish, he will not pause to deliberate whether or no *he* will be likely to ensure *your* felicity; but if he is led or driven to the irresistible conclusion, that *you* can make *his* pillow

more smooth, and *his* existence more easy, you may reasonably anticipate an offer of the old fellow's hand and heart. (?) If, on the other hand, the victim you are striving to fascinate is what is vulgarly and facetiously denominated "a jolly old dog," your mode of proceeding must be somewhat different. The *gay* "Old Bachelor" is generally a wicked old dog, has as great an inclination for young girls as a greedy child has for green apricots, and is very liable to be caught by a dazzling person, a sparkling eye, and large, pouting lips. Dress, too, judiciously managed, is a very valuable auxiliary in captivating this kind of "Old Bachelor;" and many an old fool has been caught by the ingenious "make-up" of some fashionable milliner.

To resume: the Spinster, in order to catch an "Old Bachelor," must either act the part of a nurse, give him his black draught, and place his gouty foot in the easiest position, or she

must be a superb *Lais*, flattering his sensual tastes and gratifications.

I come now to that naughty species of bachelor, y'clept in common parlance the "Rake."

The "Rake" is, or ought to be, case-hardened to all female attractions and seductions. He has bought his experience, dearly perhaps, but yet he *has* bought it, and the scenes he has witnessed, the ordeals he has passed through, and the profligacies in which he has been an actor, would, one should at first be inclined to think, render him the least likely being in the world to be caught by the virtuous and moral pleasures of the conjugal fireside. To the man who has hovered from lip to lip, like the bee from rose to rose, sipping from each and all, but settling upon none, the matrimonial honey of *one* pair of lips—however genuine "*Hymettus*" it might be—would, you might suppose, soon become insipid. The "Don Juan," who, like *Jocande*, has courted and vanquished "*la brune et la blonde*," would,

you must fancy, feel but little inclination to be transmogrified into a Mr. "Job Candle." The "Rake," from his very "rakishness," *must* entertain a bad opinion of women; he has seen the manœuvres and artifices of the sex; he has watched their small stratagems and their petty perfidies; he knows thoroughly "the *ressorts de la pendule*." The prude has melted in his arms; the ingenuous-looking maid has sacrificed her "ingenuousness" to him for a ten pound note, a diamond ring, or a new dress; and the wife of his "friend" has pressed her lips to his.

The "Rake," then, of all bachelors in the world, would, to all appearances, be a target impenetrable to all spinsters' and cupid's arrows—to all, at least, aimed in an *honourable* way. And yet "Rakes" are caught every day; and these "free lances" of gallantry are constantly drilled and disciplined into the "regulars" of matrimony! The reasons of this are various. Perhaps the "Rake" becomes

tired of those transitory connexions which generally leave behind them no remembrances but unpleasant ones—perhaps his fortune is dilapidated, and he takes a wife as the “means,” and her fortune as the “end”—perhaps, in a caprice of taste, he has a mind to try a plain domestic joint, after all the knick-knackeries of “made dishes” and French cookery. Whatever the cause, the fact is certain, “Rakes” do marry in equal, if not greater proportion, to others of the *genus* bachelor. My spinster readers have doubtless heard the saying, “a reformed rake makes the best husband;” and upon mature reflection I am inclined to agree with this popular *dictum*. If the “Rake” be *really* “reformed,” there is no earthly reason why he should not be a pattern of conjugality. He will be less liable to go astray from the domestic fire-side, because his experience in the days of his “Rakehood” will already have taught him that the fruits of unlicensed love are “bitter in the mouth;”

and he will be more apt to treat his wife with consideration and attention, because he recollects the neglected and insulted wives, whom the brutality or carelessness of their "liege lords" has, "long, long ago," thrown into *his* Lothario arms. It is true the "Rake" may turn out rather a "jealous" husband; but jealousy, you know, is the proof of love; and if his experience in woman's frailty *does* render him in some degree suspicious of his own wife, that same experience will have pointed out to him the rocks upon which other husbands have struck, with loss of the cargo of conjugal honour—and have taught him the safe channel through which he can steer in safety from the breakers. But, Spinsters, the great risk in marrying a "Rake" is the chance of his *not* being a "reformed" one—and then, indeed, too often the consequences are most *harrowing*! As the veteran who has lost a leg in the service of his country, is said at times to feel, even in his *jambe de bois*, the smart of the

wound, for which his fleshy " supporter " was amputated, so sometimes the Rake, who has professedly, and to all appearance, become a " new man," feels certain unaccountable and irresistible twitchings of the " old Adam," which twitchings are omens of anything but tranquillity to the household gods of married life.

A friend of mine—who had been what is called an " awful rake," having determined to relinquish his evil courses, and to become a respectable member of society, married a young, beautiful, and rich woman. I went to see him a couple of years after his marriage, and found him living at a lovely country-seat, and in the enjoyment apparently of every worldly comfort and luxury. There was that indescribable aspect of elegance and refinement about everything in his establishment, which denoted unmistakeable evidence, that a polished and lady-like woman presided over the whole. The dinner was perfect, the servants attentive, but noiseless, which is the perfection

of a servant—the hostess agreeable, intellectual, and more beautiful than ever. After dinner, when the cloth was removed, the dessert discussed, and the lady vanished, I and my friend began discoursing of old times, and old adventures: we grew quite animated and jovial. I fancied at dinner, that he looked more grave than a man in the enjoyment of such numerous advantages might be expected to look, and dwelt with exceeding *gusto* on many a racy anecdote of the days gone by. A pause happening to occur in our conversation, I took advantage of it to “improve” the occasion, and to congratulate him upon the much greater happiness he must *now* enjoy, in the possession of such an amiable wife, whose beauty was only equalled by her virtue and affection, than he formerly experienced, when playing the immoral and profitless *rôle* of a *roue*. With a significant elevation of the eyebrows, and an ominous shrug of the shoulders, the *ci-devant* Rake replied thus—“My good fellow, all you

say is very right in its way, but you don't know anything about it. I am perfectly aware that Emily is everything you have described—beautiful, affectionate, and virtuous—I freely confess that I ought to be the happiest fellow in the world ; but—I am not! Between ourselves, Jack,” he added, lowering his voice to a whisper, “ I am like a horse turned out to graze in a deliciously green meadow : but there is a log round my leg to prevent my trespassing into any other field. Marriage is all very well, but there is no excitement or danger in kissing your own wife; and, d——n it, Jack, love is but an insipid dish if it is not flavoured with the cayenne of sin! That's the rub, Jack ; I miss the *sin*!” I consoled with my unhappy friend, and quitted him ; though I cannot say I felt much compassion for his unhappiness.

Another circumstance which has a powerful operation in rendering the “ Rake ” disinclined to matrimony, is that self-restraint and decorum, which the married state requires of its votaries.

The " Rake " has been so accustomed to the " sans gêne " and freedom of the mistress, that he does not particularly fancy the more staid and sober demeanour of a wife. In those illicit connexions, to which I have alluded, there is a kind of " slipper-and-dressing-gown " comfort, which cannot be tolerated in more legitimate ties. This, in my opinion, is the secret cause of the influence which " naughty women " often obtain. A mistress is a kind of " tenant at will "—or pleasure—and knows that she is liable to be turned out of possession in a moment. It is therefore her interest to consult, as far as in her lies, all the wishes, whims, and caprices, of her fickle landlord. The wife, on the other hand, stands in a more important position; she holds upon " a lease for lives "—" till death you do part "—and is consequently less sedulous in studying the *penchants* of her lord and master. The mistress never neglects her person or her dress; she knows that " desire " has a great deal to do with *her* " tenure,"

and she takes her measures accordingly ; while the wife, secure in legal possession, sometimes becomes a dowdy or a slattern, when she has once captivated and fairly bagged her victim. This is a great mistake. Men, and especially “ Rakes ”—like to have their fancies attended to ; and generally finding this to be more the case with a mistress than a wife, they prefer the former, and eschew the latter.

The prudent Spinster, if desirous of ensnaring a Rake, should herself become to some degree rakish—“ *pares paribus gaudent* ; and yet in that very assumed rakishness she should still exhibit—and this is the perfection of a Spinster’s art—firm virtue, and unassailable principles. Your “ Rake,” however doubtful of the sex’s principles in general, wishes his own choice to be an exception ; he may deal very lightly with the virtue of other men’s wives, but he is a monstrous stickler for that “ gem ” in *his own*. The recipe, then, which I should recommend to the Spinster for “ rake-catching ”

is this—excite *his* senses, but be not led away by your own; affect the greatest possible contempt, for “prudes,” but never grant him a favour; do not blush outrageously when he talks of love, but never smile at a *double entendre*; ridicule “Platonics,” if you like, before him, but do not let him see you associate with a woman of damaged reputation. The “Rake” may be a sensualist, but he chooses sensuality in the mistress—the mere plaything of his idle hours—not in the wife of his domestic hearth; the Rake may profess to believe not in female chastity, but *his* wife must be chaste in thought, word and deed; the “Rake” may be of a gross and “*swine*”-ish nature, but the matrimonial pearl that is cast before him, must be spotless in its purity, or he will not pick it up.

I shall, as usual, wind up the chapter with my muse’s assistance.

THE " OLD BACHELOR ;"

OR,

Gout versus Gout.

A MATRIMONIAL MELODY.

He's old, and stricken well in years,
The bachelor I seek ;
The crow's-foot's underneath his eye,
The wrinkle's on his cheek.
He's quite a martyr to the gout—
I care not though he be ;
I'll swaddle up his gouty toes,
If he will marry me.

They say he's fretful in his moods,
And grumbles all day long ;
And that he raps out awful oaths
When anything goes wrong.

I should not care for all his oaths,
Though awful they might be,
If at the altar he would "swear"—
To love and cherish me !

I've always heard, and know it is
The Spinster's wisest plan
In matrimony to look at
The *marriage*, not the *man*.
My aged swain has gems and gold,
Decrepid though he be ;
His *yellow* guineas won't turn *gray*,
When he has married me !

Beside the altar should we stand,
Some folks perhaps might say,
" There's January, poor old fool,
Bound tight to blooming May !"—
But let them talk—more girls than one
Will at my wedding be,
Who fain would catch that " poor old fool,"
Were he not caught by me !

I do not think he *can* last long,
He is *so* full of ills ;
He's shaky on his legs, and trusts
In Morison-ian pills.
Perhaps upon the bridal night
I shall a widow be,
And change my orange *flowers* for *weeds*—
Oh ! happiness to me !

Yes, I'll accept the dear old soul,
Gout, greggy nose, bald head ;
I'd sooner wed a patriarch
Than be through life *un*-wed.
I've heard it said, a " green old age "
Must very pleasant be ;
And *he'll* be *green* enough, God knows !
If he should marry me !

CHAPTER VII.

THE WIDOWER; AND THEREON INCIDENTALLY
OF THE WIDOW—THE CHAPTER AND THE
WORK CONCLUDED BY SOME HINTS TO SPIN-
STERS AS TO THE PROPER MODE OF RE-
CEIVING A PROPOSAL—WHEN THEY GET
ONE.

IN my former chapters, I have confined myself to a description and analysis of those unmarried males, known by the name of "Bachelors," and I shall now add a few words upon a less numerous, but still somewhat important class, viz., the "Widowers." The Spinster will find much discrimination and adroit-

ness necessary in pursuit of this species of prey. The "Widower" has, you must bear in mind, my gentle readers, already gone through the ordeal of love, courtship, and matrimony; and, like the burnt child who dreads the fire, he sometimes has a strong antipathy to a second edition of these "remarkable trials."

To the "Bachelor," matrimony is at least a *terra incognita*; and though it may be a fearful region, abounding with quagmires, quick-sands, and horrid monsters, it may, on the other hand, turn out an epitome of paradise, a land flowing with milk and honey, a garden full of rare and precious flowers.

With the "Widower," however, the case is widely different. Marriage is no sealed book to him. He probably remembers the hopes and glorious aspirations of his bachelor days, the pleasant illusions of his courtship; the brief "honey" of the first month, and, mayhap, the protracted "vinegar" of succeeding years.

The "Widower"—*parva componere magnis*—may be likened to an "old bird," who during a hard winter has approached too near some barn, where the tempting "train" was laid, and who, entertaining unpleasant reminiscences of dust-shot and a broken leg, is not to be "caught" a second time by "chaff." The "Widower," too, is rather in a dilemma. Either the wife he has lost was such an angel, that it would be profanation to give *her* a successor, and *her* dear children (if she has left any) a step-mother; or she was such an "uncommon bad one," that common prudence would make him pause, before entailing on himself such another visitation.

The Widower of feeling must recoil from seeing another face, and another form, lighting up those well-known scenes, which *she* once graced so admirably—the Widower of feeling could scarcely—one should think—endure the steps of a stranger, however fair, to tread over and efface the vestiges of the last one—

the Widower of feeling would surely shrink from pressing the lips of another, when those lips which once met his own are hushed in their endles repose.

And here I *will* digress for a moment, from the worldly instructions which I have been inculcating. In my eyes a second marriage—on whichever side—is that worst of all sacrileges, a sacrilege of the heart; the being you have loved is no more; never shall that voice be heard again which once gladdened your heart with its melody; never more shall that hand which once pressed yours in affection, repose in your tender grasp; never shall those worshipped eyes meet yours again with a glance of ineffable sympathy. The tie is dissolved; the links are broken asunder; the golden bowl is broken, and the accents which fell upon your ear in touching love, are hushed for ever in an endless slumber. The one who bore life's bitter cross with you, whose caresses consoled your

hours of disappointment, and whose angel care smoothed the pillow on your couch of sickness ; the one whose tears greeted your departure, and whose smiles welcomed your return ; the rose in your dreary path, the one gushing spring on the arena of your existence, has vanished ; and the churchyard mound, the wild flowers that spring there, and the plaintive robin that sings his melancholy winter song over the spot —are all that earth has left to recal the memory of the dead.

Angry words may perchance have passed between you ; coldness may have for a time checked the bounding heart, and frozen up the gush of affection ; but still the heart longed to bound, and beneath those icy fetters the warm stream of love was deeply flowing. Death has swallowed up all the little animosities, all the petty differences and discussions which prevailed between you, and a treaty of eternal peace has been signed over the grave.

How truly says Emile Souvestre—"The slightest separation extinguishes resentment in a generous heart; but to transform that resentment into tenderness, it requires that greatest absence of all, that absence which we know to be without hope, and from which there is no return!

We may be told of a happier meeting in realms above; we may be bid to look upon the bliss which has passed as a mere mortal dream, to be realized in ten thousandfold bliss during an eternity in heaven; but these consolations in the first agony of grief fall coldly upon the ear, which has listened to that dread formula of "dust to dust," to the ominous and gloomy rattle of the earth upon the coffin. Our "household gods" are "shivered;" we return to the lonely hearth, where the lost one once sat to greet us; we gaze at the vacant seat, the glove forgotten on the table, the little relics of the departed; and, oh! how bitterly

recur to our bleeding hearts each word of unkindness, each hour of neglect, which that departed one endured from us, and which we would now give worlds to recal!

Cold and heartless, then, must that man—or woman—be, who throws off with the mourning the memory of the mourned, and fills that vacant seat with the form of a stranger.

A truce to sentiment; let me return to reality. Widowers *do* marry again! and Spinsters therefore must look upon them as licensed game. The Spinster should in the pursuit be guided by various and important considerations. If the Widower has been happy in his first *ménage*, she should skilfully find out the nature and disposition of the deceased wife, and adopt the same characteristics as far as she can; should force a sympathizing tear into her eye, when he alludes to his “bereavement,” and take every opportunity of delicately praising the manifold excellences of the defunct. If the late Mrs.—— has left any children, the careful

Spinster should be expansive in her kindness to them, and attach them as much as possible to herself by an extravagant expenditure of gingerbread nuts and lollypops *ad infinitum*. By these and similar means, the disconsolate "Widower" may be gradually brought into some such train of reflection as the following—"What a kind heart that girl has! how well she understands my lacerated feelings! how fond too my children seem of her!—how good she is to them!—and then there is really something of my lost Caroline about her!—Children want a woman to look after them, and I am sure *she* would never become a harsh step-mother"—and so on, till the lost Caroline is completely cut out by the living Julia, and the funeral repast gives place to the marriage banquet.

If, on the other hand, there have been more thorns than roses in the past matrimonial career of the Widower, the Spinster must, after due and cautious investigation, assume

a character totally different to that of the deceased. The "Widower" will probably be struck by the contrast; will compare the amiabilities of the living, to the disagreeables of the dead; will anticipate a happy home, in the possession of a wife so diametrically opposite to her whose loss he outwardly deplures, but inwardly rejoices in; will flatter himself with drawing a prize *this* time (not a blank, as before) in the matrimonial lottery, and will act upon the cheerful saying of "better luck next time." The illusions of short-sighted mortals are innumerable, and the "Widower" may fondly trust that, by an Ondine metamorphosis, the yoke which was so galling and so oppressive in the *first* instance, may become a chain of roses in the *second*.

I have said my say about Widowers: let me now add a few words about Widows. It may have appeared strange to some of my readers, that the preceding pages of this book have been exclusively addressed to Spinsters,

while that important class of husband hunters who rejoice in its name of Widows have been completely overlooked. Let me not, however, be accused of partiality or forgetfulness, on account of this omission: my reason was a simple, and I trust, will prove a satisfactory one. This Treatise was intended for the use of those fair ones who might not possess *in re* the experience necessary, or at least important, of husband-catching. The "Widow," however, is in quite a different category—she has been once, at least, in her life, successful in her pursuit, and the experience she has gained is likely to prove far more valuable to her, in her pursuit of a second third, or fourth victim, as the case may be, than any instructions of mine, however admirable (and *I* believe they *are* admirable) those instructions may be.

Moreover Bachelors, and *a fortiori* Widowers, have a kind of instinctive dread of "Widows," a dread unjust, no doubt, yet, in spite of its injustice, at times very considerable.

Men fancy that Widows are more artful and designing than the maiden angel, and they deem it therefore more essential to be on their guard against the machinations of the former than against the “ quips, and cranks, and wreathed smiles,” of the latter.

So now, at parting, I will only give my Spinster readers a word or two more of advice, as to the most proper mode of receiving a proposal ; I, of course, taking it for granted ; that the victim is to be “ accepted.” A refusal is a simple affair, and need only be accompanied by various kind and pathetic expressions of regret “ that *she* must decline the flattering offer of his heart and hand ;” and of hope “ that he will find some other woman who can return his affection, and make him far happier than *she*—” the fair refuser—“ could hope to do,” et cætera, et cætera, et cætera.

The ceremony of acceptance, however, is somewhat more abstruse. If the proposal is *viâ voci*, the lady must summon up—however

brazen a coquette she may be—a due number of blushes: her eyes must be cast upon the ground in a kind of half modest, half perplexed glance, and she should declare—which however is seldom true, that such an offer has “taken her quite by surprise.” When the pretty creature’s emotion is so far surmounted as to enable her to utter the wished-for “yes,” she must take care to pronounce that enchanting monosyllable in so bashful, hesitating, and embarrassed a tone, that Corydon is obliged to come close up to her before he can satisfactorily ascertain his fate.

There is another advantage, too, about this maiden hesitation. The enamoured victim, while bending down to catch her answer, may perhaps stop it half way with his lips, and a kiss is generally the shortest and most effectual mode of settling the business. Of course, circumstances must frequently determine the best mode of accepting an offer. I may, however, observe, that if the Spinster is *too*

modest—few of them are so though now-a-days—to say the awful “yes” at once, she may reply in her blandest tones, “I must refer you to papa;” or, “you had better see mamma,” blushing of course, while she betrays this modified, yet no less certain acquiescence. Should the youth be too bashful to propose *in person*, but prefer to entrust his hopes and fears to a letter (letters, we know from Pope, were first “taught for some wretch’s aid”)—the blushes of course may be dispensed with, and the Spinster will merely have to *write*, not to *look* modesty, which is a much easier task. If the proposal is made *viva voci*, the Spinster possesses one great advantage. A man always looks like a fool when he pops the question, and generally feels like one; and the very consciousness which he experiences of so looking prevents him from bestowing too troublesome an attention on the embarrassment of the lady, occupied as he fully is with his own.

My task is completed, and I hope satisfac-

torily. I have endeavoured to give the “ Spinster ” useful, but, (unlike Lord Brougham’s, *not* tedious knowledge. I have analyzed for her the various natures and habits of her various victims, and I have pointed out the “ baits ” and the tackle likely to be most attractive, and most effective. But, as I have before said, or meant to say, the Spinster can have no better instructor in the art of “ husband-catching ” than a *worldly* mother.

Fare ye well, then, “ Spinsters ; ” may your matrimonial hopes be gratified, and your fears of dying old maids prove groundless ; and believe me, I speak sincerely from the bottom of my heart, if *you* wish for a handsome, young, gentleman-like, accomplished, rich, titled, goodnatured, and agreeable husband, *I* wish no less—that you may get him ! Accept the last tribute of my pen :—

THE SPINSTER'S TRIUMPH.

A BALLAD OF HYMEN.

I stood before the bridal shrine ;
My friends were pressing round ;
A modest blush was on my cheek,
My eyes were on the ground.
But oh ! I felt a throb of pride,
Which made my heart beat fast ;—
The orange flowers were on my brow,
I'd caught the fiat at last !

And 'mid the crowd of *seeming* friends,
Who all appeared to smile,
I knew more hearts than one were full
Of envious rage, the while !

I'd marked two rivals in the throng,
Whose charms I had surpassed ;—
The orange flowers were on *my* brow,
I'd caught the flat at last !

It was not love that sent the blush
Into my cheek, so red :
He was not chosen by my *heart*,
But only by my *head*.
I loved *another*—*he* was poor,
So *him* away I cast ;—
The orange flowers were on my brow,
I'd caught the flat at last !

They told me 'twas a glorious " match,"
And mine a happy fate :
They told me he had boundless wealth,
And this and that estate.
About his *moral* treasures not
One word had ever passed ;—
The orange flowers were on my brow,
I'd caught the flat at last !

My father gazed at me with pride,
My mother with delight ;
And yet unto a stranger's arms
They gave me up that night ;
They'd done *their* task, they'd " got me off
Their hands"—*their* care was past—
The orange flowers were on my brow,
I'd caught the flat at last !

'Twas strange, 'twas very strange, the cause
I'm sure I cannot guess,
I thought of him that's far away,
Just as I murmured " Yes."
It turned me faint—I felt my heart
Throb still more wild and fast ;—
The orange flowers were on my brow,
I'd caught the flat at last !

Oh, many a long and tedious week
I'd flirted, danced, and sung,
The fiend *Ennui* within my heart,
But mirth upon my tongue ;

And many a snare for man I'd set,
And many a bait had cast;—
The orange flowers were on my brow,
I'd caught the flat at last !

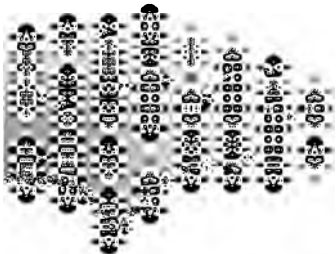
THE END.

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